

**Canada at the End of the Cold War: The Influence of a Transatlantic ‘Middle Power’ on
German Unification**

By

Karen Brglez

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
the University of Manitoba
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History
Joint-Master's Program
University of Manitoba/ University of Winnipeg
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with the question of whether the Canadian government was a partner or an onlooker in the diplomatic process of German unification at the end of the Cold War. Rather than focusing on the negotiations between the major powers that were directly involved in determining the external aspects of German unity, Canada's involvement as a middle power is explored. The role of the middle powers has been omitted from the scholarly discussion surrounding German unification. Canadian participation in ending the Cold War can be traced back to Trudeau's efforts to further détente. Canada facilitated the international relaxing of tensions until the election of the Mulroney government. The shift in foreign policy revealed the reluctance of the new government to soften Cold War hostilities. As a result, the Mulroney government endorsed the American and West German agenda for German unification since it positioned a united Germany as a security and economic partner in the western alliance against the Soviet Union and strengthened Canadian security in the post-Cold War period.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to a number of people who enabled me to complete the research and writing of this project. I owe a special debt of appreciation to Professor Alexander von Plato, who introduced me to this topic and greatly facilitated my research along the way. I particularly benefited from our many discussions and am incredibly grateful for his encouragement and expertise. I wish also to thank my advisor, Professor Alexander Freund for his guidance and expert editing that was integral in helping me complete this writing.

I thank the people who agreed to be interviewed for this research. Their personal records were instrumental in helping me piece together the events from this period. I also acknowledge with thanks the grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the University of Winnipeg, and the Spletzer Family Foundation.

Finally, I wish to thank my parents who have always encouraged me in my pursuit of learning. I thank my husband, Eduard Wiens, for his endless support and patience throughout this process, who has taught me so much about Germany, which inspired me to pursue this study. And lastly, my daughter, Autumn, to whom I devote this work, who consistently reminds me of what really matters in life.

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Introduction

The Canadian Connection to the “German Question”

On February 5, 1990, speaking to the Department of Political Science and Economics at McGill University, Canadian External Affairs Minister Joe Clark stated, “The division of Germany has been at the core of the division of Europe. As long as Germany remains divided, Europe too will remain divided. A united, free Germany holds the key to a united, free Europe.”¹ Within a matter of months of the Montreal speech, the transformation of Europe was realized. The reunification of Germany was achieved on October 3, 1990 helping end the Cold War and profoundly reshaping the center of Europe. The most stable member of the Soviet bloc, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was absorbed by the western capitalist Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), unifying the German nation after more than forty years of separation. The coming together of the German states was a fundamental turning point in the end of the Cold War. With the ceasing of the East-West confrontation, the political and security structures were drastically altered on the European continent – a single German state emerged, Eastern Europe was emancipated from the Soviets’ grip, the Warsaw Pact collapsed, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was extended to the East.² The foundations for a post-Cold War Europe had been laid.

German unification was achieved with profound political speed over the course of a single year. The transformation was initially sparked by East German citizens driving demands for reform throughout the course of 1989, spurred on by the introduction of Soviet *perestroika* and *glasnost*. The breaking down of the Berlin Wall on November 9 marked the culmination of

¹ Canadian Department of External Affairs, Joe Clark, Notes for a Speech at the Department of Political Science and Economics of McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, *Statements and Speeches*, 90/3, February 5, 1990.

² Konrad H. Jarausch, *The Rush to German Unity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 197.

the success for the civic revolution that had been mounting against the post-Stalinist rule that dominated the political landscape of the GDR. After the fall of the wall, the reform process in the East was swiftly overtaken by the unification agenda adopted by Chancellor Helmut Kohl of the FRG. East German elections in March 1990 revealed that Kohl's campaign had been a success as the majority of citizens voted for a swift unification route. Not only did the two German states have to negotiate an internal plan for unification, but international approval was also required since the "German question" was at the core of the Cold War conflict. The two German states were faced with the task of negotiating the external aspects of unification with the four victors of 1945: Britain, France, the United States, and the Soviet Union. The Two-Plus-Four forum was invented in the spring of 1990 as the platform to agree on the final settlement.

The story of international diplomacy surrounding the various facets of German unification has been told many times. A vast amount of historical scholarship has been devoted to the negotiations between the six states that were responsible for determining Germany's future.³ Yet few historians have devoted attention to the role of the international "middle powers" in the German process. The smaller neighbours were not invited to be part of the Two-Plus-Four talks. The governments of the Netherlands, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Belgium, and Spain were aggravated for being "left out" of the consultations.⁴ Alongside its European counterparts, Canada was also not included in the German talks. Canada believed itself to be a

³ These writers represent just a few of the pivotal published works on German reunification: Timothy Garten Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (New York: Random House, 1993); Alexander von Plato, *Die Vereinigung Deutschlands – ein weltpolitisches Machtspiel* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2003); Richard K. Herrmann and Richard Ned Lebow, ed. *Ending the Cold War: Interpretations, Causations, and the Study of International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Angela Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn: Unification, the Soviet Collapse, and the New Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Mary Elise Sarotte, *1989: The Struggle to Create Post-Cold War Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Peter H. Merkl, *German Unification in the European Context* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993).

⁴ Ursula Lehmkuhl, "The "Ottawa Formula" and Transatlantic Relations: Politics and Diplomacy of the "Two-Plus-Four" Negotiations." *Eurostudia* 5 (2009): 1.

principal player within the multilateral organizations of the United Nations, of NATO, and of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), and felt that its contribution to these institutions made it susceptible to the outcome of German unification. So with the awareness that Canada would be influenced by the effects of the two German states reuniting, did it press to be involved in the diplomatic process? This thesis aims to address this question by analyzing the role of the Canadian government throughout the negotiations in 1989 and 1990.

However, the main purpose of this thesis is not to write a diplomatic history, since diplomacy involves the interplay of several different countries. Rather, the intent is to write a political history, more specifically, a history of Canadian foreign policy that describes the Canadian narrative on German unification at the end of the Cold War. Although studies on German unification that only focus on the perspective of a single country are often criticized by historians⁵, the Canadian story has not yet been told. Therefore, its inclusion is vital in order to understand the larger picture of this historical event. In telling the Canadian story, this project explores Canada's strategic foreign policy position on the external issues surrounding the question of German unification. It considers Canada's bilateral relationships with the major powers, the government's involvement in ending the Cold War, its policy directives on a united Germany in NATO, and the future of the CSCE. This thesis hopes to make a contribution to the growing scholarship on transatlantic relations with Germany in Canadian foreign policy in the twentieth century.⁶

⁵ Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice. *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), xvii.

⁶ See, for example, the pivotal study by Roy Rempel, *Counterweights: The Failure of Canada's German and European Policy, 1955-1995* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996); David Haglund, "A Tale of Two 'Canadianizations': Some North American Perspectives on Transatlantic Relations," in *Transatlantic Relations in Transition*, ed. Oliver Thränert (Bonn: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 1993), 69-76; Roy Rempel, "Canada, Germany, and Alliance Relations in the Crisis Years of 1958-61: A Study in the Nature of Alliance Politics," *Militär-geschichtliche Mitteilungen* 53 (1994), 85-100; Roy Rempel, "Canada's Troop Deployment in Germany: Twilight of a Forty-Year Presence?" in *Homeward Bound?: Allied Forces in the New Germany*, ed. David Haglund

Since Canada was not at the table for the German talks, its influence was restricted to its involvement in the international institutions as a middle power. After the Second World War, Canadian officials had adopted the concept of a middle power status in hopes of distinguishing Canada's position in the international order. However, the expression "middle power" has produced an ongoing debate and discussion amongst scholars over its meaning, and whether or not the concept is important for Canadian foreign policy makers.⁷ This thesis builds on the work of Paul Gecelovsky, who argues that the middle power concept has been an integral component in the drafting of Canadian foreign policy in the postwar period. The middle power idea has become an important framework for how Canada sees itself in the world.

As a middle power, Canada is not at the top of the global power balance, but believes its position with respect to other states provides it with an opportunity to contribute to international order and peace. This rank in the global hierarchy results in a "style of state behavior" in which Canada uses its ability and resources to commit to international objectives.⁸ Although middle powers are susceptible to the whims of the great powers, they are more easily capable of supporting international initiatives that encourage a stable world order.⁹ In the mid-1980s, former Canadian diplomat and academic, John Holmes, argued that, "It is through international institutions, furthermore, that lesser powers can, by consolidating their interests with those of

and Olaf Mager (Boulder: Westview, 1992), 213-247; Daniel Macfarlane, "Courting War Over a Rubber Stamp: Canada and the 1961 Berlin Wall Crisis," *International Journal* 63 no.3 (2008), 751-768; Markus Kaim, "Germany, Afghanistan, and the Future of NATO," *International Journal* 63 no. 3 (2008), 607-623; George A. McLean, ed. *Between Actor and Presence: The European Union and the Future of the Transatlantic Partnership* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2001); and Petra Dolata-Kreutzkamp, "Canada-Germany-EU: Energy Security and Climate Change," *International Journal* 63 no.3 (2008), 665-681.

⁷ For an in-depth study on the middle power debate, see Paul Gecelovsky, "Constructing a Middle Power: Ideas and Canadian Foreign Policy," *Canadian Foreign Policy* 15:1 (2009): 77-93.

⁸ Andrew F. Cooper, Richard A. Higgott, and Kim Richard Nossal, *Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 1993, 78, quoted in Paul Gecelovsky, "Constructing a Middle Power: Ideas and Canadian Foreign Policy," *Canadian Foreign Policy* 15:1 (2009): 77-93.

⁹ Tom Keating, *Canada and World Order: The Multilateralist Tradition in Canadian Foreign Policy*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Inc., 2013), 16.

other countries, hope to have some impact on the great powers.”¹⁰ Canada’s exclusion from the Two-Plus-Four talks forced the government to use its middle power standing to achieve its objectives in regards to German reunification. Thus, the Canadian government’s role at the end of the Cold War needs to be considered within its limitations as a middle power on the international scene.

As a middle power, Canada was also dependant on its multilateral connections for its security and economic well-being. Canada’s transatlantic link to Europe had been a central feature of Canadian foreign policy in the post-war era. The developments that ushered in the end of the Soviet Union, the division of Germany, and the Cold War had repercussions for Canada’s connection to the European continent. Although Canada’s transatlantic relationship with Europe had experienced differing levels of commitment in the postwar years with Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau’s defense cuts, and later Prime Minister Brian Mulroney’s commitment to continentalism, its connection to the European community had been consistently preserved. The end of the Cold War and the unification of the German states forced Canada to reassess its past links with the continent and forge new relationships in the new European architecture. While recognizing Canada’s middle power position in global politics, this thesis considers how the Canadian government aligned itself in the rebuilding of a new Europe and whether it was on some level a partner or an onlooker in the German diplomatic process.

This work contributes to the lively scholarly debate that has examined how the German states achieved unity after four decades of separation. For such a contemporary event, a mass amount of published material – documents, memoirs, books, articles - have been devoted to understanding the German process. The initial scholarly works that emerged in the first years

¹⁰ John Holmes, “The United Nations in Perspective.” *Behind the Headlines* vol. 44 (1986), 13, quoted in Tom Keating, *Canada and World Order: The Multilateralist Tradition in Canadian Foreign Policy* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Inc., 1993), 17.

following unification focused less on historical interpretation, and rather sought to provide a coherent account of the rapid pace of events. Some historical examples include, Konrad Jarausch's story told from the larger perspective of German history or Karl Kaiser's collection that relied on the most valuable official documents to construct an orderly narrative.¹¹ After the unified German government chose to declassify their archival files, a second wave of unification literature appeared.¹² The availability of the primary documentation allowed different political perspectives to emerge. Charles Maier used the open archival files from the GDR to argue the influence of the agency of East Germans in the process.¹³ American diplomats, Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, who participated in the negotiations as part of the American National Security Council, wrote their account emphasizing the role of American involvement, including giving credit to the relationship between President George Bush and Kohl for the success of German diplomacy.¹⁴ The most extensive work from the perspective of the FRG came from political scientist, Werner Weidenfeld, in his official history of the events in a four part volume commissioned by the chancellery. Weidenfeld placed an emphasis on Kohl's "ten-point" plan of November 1989 as the impetus that pushed the German states to unify.¹⁵ The Soviet perspective is tackled by Hannes Adomeit in his informative study based on Soviet and East German archival evidence. Adomeit argued that Soviet President, Mikhail Gorbachev never actively promoted German unification, but was forced to acquiesce because of the Soviets increasing loss

¹¹ Jarausch, 1994; Karl Kaiser, *Deutschlands Vereinigung: die internationalen Aspekte* (Bergisch-Gladbach, 1993). Other examples include: Stephen Szabo, *The Diplomacy of German Unification* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992); Don Oberdorfer, *The Turn: From the Cold War to a New Era* (New York: John Hopkins University Press, 1991).

¹² For a more detailed understanding of the historiography on German reunification, see Kristina Spohr, "German Unification: Between Official History, Academic Scholarship, and Political Memoirs," *The Historical Journal* 43 no.3 (2000): 869-888.

¹³ Charles Maier, *Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

¹⁴ Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice. *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

¹⁵ Werner Weidenfeld, "Aussenpolitik für die Deutsche Einheit: die Entscheidungsjahre 1989/90, vol. IV," in *Geschichte der deutschen Einheit: in vier Bänden* (Stuttgart: 1998).

of control throughout Eastern Europe.¹⁶ The extensive collection of scholarly works on German unification offer competing explanations to explain how the process actually unfolded.

In general, the large body of literature that is available has been German-centered, with a tendency to emphasize the U.S. and Soviet factors. What is missing in the scholarly discussion is placing German unification in a wider historical and global context. The smaller powers have been almost entirely omitted in the unification narrative. This study then serves to involve Canada in the framework of German unification, while also providing a new dimension in the Canadian-German transatlantic relationship at the end of the Cold War period. Including the Canadian angle contributes to the debate by expanding the parameters of German unification for the next wave of historical research.

The following chapters in this thesis attempt to answer the many unresolved questions surrounding Canada's role in German unification and subsequent end to the Cold War: Did Trudeau's détente politics help transform the international situation to allow for the end of the Cold War? Were détente politics with the East extended under the Mulroney government? What was Canada's response to Gorbachev's 'new thinking' in the Soviet Union which opened the way for the Eastern European revolutions? Did the Canadian government want to be included in the Two-Plus-Four talks? If so, on what basis could it have pressed to be included? Did Canada support a unified Germany in NATO? What was its policy towards adapting the CSCE? Was Canadian defense policy in tune with its foreign policy?

In answering these questions, the argument is as follows. The Canadian government in late 1989 and throughout 1990 consistently supported a reunified Germany, one that was both fully integrated into NATO and within the European community. Canadian participation in

¹⁶ Hannes Adomeit, *Imperial Overstretch: Germany is Soviet Policy from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1998).

aiding the end of the Cold War can be traced back to Trudeau's reconciliation efforts in ending the East-West confrontation in the 1970s. Trudeau's pragmatist position in advocating for the need to recognize the legitimacy of the East German state contributed to a more balanced view on the German question. Trudeau's détente politics facilitated the international relaxation of tensions which helped prepare the future ground for unification. However, the Mulroney government of the late 1980s acted more cautiously with respect to the Cold War conflict. As reforms were introduced in the Soviet Union and began to spread throughout Eastern Europe, the Mulroney administration lagged behind its western allies in recognizing the changes, still firmly holding to entrenched Cold War beliefs. Only towards the end of 1989, did the Canadian government fully embrace the drastic transformations underway in the East. The Prime Minister's scepticism kept his allegiance tightly tied to the interests of his western allies. The Mulroney government allied itself closely with the FRG and the American administration on the issue of German reunification. Mulroney's few reservations on the matter concerned the economic strength of a great Germany for the future common European market. Otherwise, the Canadian government consistently supported unification, with the condition that it would be strictly tied to western controlled institutions. Throughout the course of 1990, Canadian policy did not deviate from a NATO dominated post-Cold War order. The government believed Canadian security was tied to the security of Europe, and thus claimed it was crucial that a unified Germany be within its alliance. Ultimately, Canadian foreign policy was dominated by the need to be on the winning side of the Cold War against its Soviet adversaries. This belief resulted in complete support for a western dominated unified Germany, one that was considered a security and economic partner, and together in their alliance was able to further extend their influence and control in post-Cold War Europe.

The methodological framework for this thesis is historical narrative. To cite Martin Kitchen, “History, as the word suggests, is essentially about telling a story.”¹⁷ In order to carefully reconstruct the Canadian narrative of German unification, I situated the events that rapidly unfolded at the end of the Cold War in chronological order. Due to the speed in which German unity was achieved, this method was the most effective for me to appropriately explore and interpret how one development led to another. By placing the events of this period in sequence, a single Canadian plot emerged out of the complex story of German unification.

This approach divided the thesis into three separate sections. After an introductory summary of Canada in the early Cold War period, chapter one addresses the détente politics of the Trudeau era and its influence on the end of the Cold War. Chapter two analyzes how the Mulroney government responded to the revolutionary changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe throughout 1989. Soviet disintegration was one of the fundamental developments that enabled the German states to unify. The final chapter focuses on the intensified diplomatic negotiations for German unification in the early months of 1990. It examines Canada’s relationship to the Two-Plus-Four forum, including the actions taken by the Canadian government in response to its exclusion. It also deals with the Canadian position on the reconstruction of a new Europe. It considers the Canadian debates, and then official policy directives, on the evolving security systems, particularly the integration of a unified Germany in NATO and the role of the CSCE for a new Europe. Finally, the conclusion looks at Canada’s political and strategic interests with its European transatlantic link in the wake of German reunification in the post-Cold War climate.

This work relies on an extensive selection of English-speaking primary source materials. In contrast to some of the European countries, the official Canadian documents are still closed in

¹⁷ Martin Kitchen, *A History of Modern Germany, 1800-2000* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 8.

the archives at this time. Therefore, this thesis depends on the published Canadian sources that were accessible at the time of writing. These include, the Canadian House of Commons and Senate debates, a government report on the situation in the Germanies and Soviet Union throughout 1989 and 1990, speeches from Canadian leaders, and the personal memoirs from those involved. In addition, with the assistance of historian Dr. Alexander von Plato, interviews were conducted with Canadian politicians and former Foreign Service diplomats that were directly involved with the Canadian government at the end of the Cold War. The willing participants included: Lloyd Axworthy, Bill Blaikie, Robert Fowler, Paul Heinbecker, Jeremy Kinsman, Gaetan Lavertu, and John Noble.¹⁸ Since the official files are not yet open, I tried to create a broad and extensive base of research of both public and personal sources to determine the Canadian role in German unification.

Due to the variety of evidence, this thesis will carefully consider the complexities of interpreting meaning from both written and oral sources. Much of the state documents that are available are beneficial for the reconstruction of events, but were created by people with a keen awareness of its intended public audience. To counter the strictly public domain, the oral history interviews that are used sporadically throughout the thesis provide a more personal aspect to the intended narrative. It was the interviewees' remembrances that helped me analyze the other written primary materials by comparing and contrasting them to reconstruct the Canadian narrative on German unity.

The main criticism of working with oral sources is the subjective nature of personal memory. In addition, a criticism unique to interviewing politicians is that they are particularly adept with the media and are used to framing their memories in order to build their political

¹⁸ Interviews were made available to me by Alexander von Plato and the Oral History Center at the University of Winnipeg. All interview recordings and transcripts used in this thesis are in the possession of the author.

legacy. Canadian politicians also craft their memories at the end of the Cold War based on the knowledge that they are the “winners”, and many hope to gain some credit in this victory.

Throughout my research, I was aware of the complexity of oral sources and the need to exercise caution when interpreting meaning from personal memory. With this knowledge, I tried to interpret each witness account as critically as possible. Although these oral sources are inherently subjective, every historical source whether it is a newspaper, government document, photograph, letter, diary, and interview – is an artificial reconstruction of a historical reality that needs to be cautiously interpreted.¹⁹ It is the balanced mixture of the “remembered” and the “written” that allows for the historian to leave behind a more abundant record.

Background of the Cold War Confrontation

Understanding the direction of Canadian foreign policy on German reunification requires a reconstruction of early Cold War history. The division of Germany began with the end of the Second World War. Unsure of how to deal with the “enemy”, wartime conferences transferred sovereignty to an Allied Control Council made up of the Four Powers.²⁰ To facilitate occupation the council divided the country into four separate geographical zones, but with the common adversary defeated, relations between the four-power administrations quickly deteriorated.²¹ Disagreements over economic rebuilding plans between the three western capitalist zones and their Soviet socialist allies led to the outbreak of the Cold War. Four-power cooperation officially ended when the Soviets walked out of the Allied Control Council in 1948, placing the country into two opposing ideological camps. Subsequent crises, such as the currency reform that was implemented in the western zones and the ensuing Berlin Blockade further exasperated

¹⁹ Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigo Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 53.

²⁰ Zelikow and Rice, 43.

²¹ Jarausch, 7.

the conflict. In the fall of 1949, Britain, France, and the U.S. sponsored the establishment of the FRG with its government centered in the western city of Bonn. In the east, the Soviets followed by backing the formation of the GDR ruled by the Socialist Unity Party (SED).²² With a divided Germany in the heart of Europe, the Soviets continued to consolidate their control in Central and Eastern Europe. The international order descended into unfriendly relations between the western, democratic countries against the Soviet Union.

All early attempts at German reunification were unsuccessful. Parties on both sides promised an eventual return to unity, but neither was willing to make concessions. The FRG demanded “free elections”, confident that its capitalist economy would take the majority, while the East claimed it desired a socialist confederation of the two states.²³ Eventually, unification talks lessened as the FRG was placed on a pro-Western path that sought democracy and favoured a market oriented economic policy, while the GDR aligned itself closer to Stalinism. By 1955 the goal of reunification was nearly obsolete as the two German states joined opposing military alliances, the FRG in NATO and the GDR in the Warsaw Pact.²⁴ Reunification was further pushed off the negotiating table when the ideological partition materialized in 1961 with the East German construction of the Berlin Wall.

Canada found itself engaged in the Cold War at the end of the 1940s. As one of the western countries it shared in the fear with its allies of the Soviet Union’s expanding global influence. Canadian foreign policy responded by establishing Canada’s membership within the newly formed international institutions such as the United Nations and NATO. Political scientists, Reg Whitaker and Gary Marcuse, contend that Canada’s postwar lesson was clear, “Canada should now do what it could as a middle power to encourage the formation of the

²² Jaraus, 8.

²³ *Ibid.*, 8.

²⁴ Zelikow and Rice, 57.

instruments of collective security against the menace of totalitarian aggression and play its fair part in shouldering the burden of the alliance's defense."²⁵ This meant a full engagement in the principle of multilateralism. The formation of NATO in 1949, which joined ten European nations, Canada and the United States in a military alliance, firmly cemented Canada's commitment to the Cold War. It also gave Canada the added opportunity of developing bilateral links with other alliance members. As the power of the continental European countries increased within the alliance during the 1950s, Canada became politically and economically closer to the FRG. The Canadian commitment to West Germany was further entrenched when Canadian ground and air forces were deployed to the West German state beginning in 1951. In November, the first 1500 troops arrived in the FRG. The NATO commitment reached its peak by the mid-1950s with approximately 10,000 active personnel on the ground.²⁶ This was in response to the constant Soviet military threat coming from the neighbouring GDR, coupled with the outbreak of the Korean War. Canadian historian, Roy Rempel, argues that the proposal to send Canadian troops to the FRG was initially a NATO commitment, but in time turned into a direct pledge to West Germany.²⁷ In the early post-war period, Canadian foreign policy was dominated by commitments to its transatlantic institutions as the answer to its Cold War warring.

Throughout the 1950s, Canadian foreign policy continued to be mobilized against defeating the Communist scare. This view was embodied in NATO, and also in the FRG with respect to its Eastern policy. The post-war West German government supported a "policy of strength" which demanded that there would be no improvements in East-West relations, until the

²⁵ Reg Whitaker and Gary Marcuse, *The Making of a National Insecurity State, 1945-1957* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 5.

²⁶ David S. Sorenson, "Canadian Military Forces in the Federal Republic of Germany," in *Canada and NATO: Uneasy Past, Uncertain Future*, ed. Margaret O. MacMillan and David S. Sorenson (Waterloo: University of Waterloo Press, 1990), 67-68.

²⁷ Roy Rempel, *Counterweights: The Failure of Canada's German and European Policy, 1955-1995* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 5.

German states had unified. The FRG was not willing to relax tensions with the East until reunification had been accomplished on their western-oriented terms.²⁸ In addition, Bonn enacted the Hallstein doctrine in 1950, which refused to recognize the legitimacy of the East German state, and going even further, stated they would suspend diplomatic relations with any country that maintained relations.²⁹

As a member of their alliance, Canadian foreign policy stayed within the West German request, although by the early 1960s cracks were beginning to appear within NATO over the FRG's hard-line Eastern strategy. Furthermore, sweeping changes to the Cold War conflict would soon follow in Canada, with the accession of the Trudeau administration coupled with the 1970s arrival of *détente*. This began the international transformation process that would eventually lead the German states down a path to unity.

²⁸ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 16.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

Chapter I

The Significance of Trudeau's Détente Politics on German Reunification

In an address given on May 29, 1968, the newly elected Canadian Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau affirmed the emerging international thaw in Cold War tensions when he stated, "It is no longer realistic to think in terms of a monolithic Communist unity such as Stalin could impose. There has been a perceptible détente in East-West relations. It is no longer true to say that the Communist world is monolithically and implacably hostile to us."³⁰ By the mid-1960s the Cold War confrontation began to give way to a new era of relaxation and increased contact between East and West, known as détente. In Europe, this was led by West Germany's new *Ostpolitik* that sought "change through rapprochement" through a policy of recognition and normalization with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.³¹ Further progress was made throughout the 1970s with negotiation for arms reductions in Europe between the two superpowers, the Multilateral Balanced Force Reduction Talks or MBFR. The climax of détente culminated in the creation of the CSCE, a conference through which the western powers could engage in dialogue with the Soviet bloc. Cooperation between the sides was achieved with the signing of the Helsinki Accords on August 1, 1975, which confirmed the existing borders in Europe, while also pledging to respect human rights.³²

In the spirit of détente, the West German government headed by Chancellor Willy Brandt broke away from the Hallstein Doctrine that had refused to recognize the status of the GDR. The

³⁰ Pierre Trudeau, Statement by the Prime Minister on 'Canada and the World', Ottawa, May 29, 1968, in *Lifting the Shadow of War*, ed. C. David Crenna (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd., 1987), 5.

³¹ Zelikow and Rice, 58. The phrase "change through rapprochement" (*Wandel durch Annäherung*) was first used by Willy Brandt's close advisor, Egon Bahr in comments following a speech given by Brandt at the Protestant Academy in Tutzing in June 1963.

³² Robert Bothwell, *The Big Chill: Canada and the Cold War* (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1998), 91.

FRG switched to conciliation proposing the formula “two states within one German nation.”³³ Mutual recognition between the two German states was signed into a treaty in December 1972.³⁴ Brandt’s government continued to honour the objective of eventual German unification, but placed its political priority behind the goal of reduced tensions with the East. Brandt’s *Ostpolitik* and the international climate of détente in the 1970s contributed to the easing of East-West hostility that made German unity eventually possible in 1990.³⁵ Although there are many multiple and complex factors as to why German unity and the demise of the Cold War were achieved, détente needs to be credited as one of the critical dynamics that helped transform the international situation.

To understand Canada’s role in the process of German unification, the connection between detente and the Trudeau government needs to be considered. Détente proceeded across three fronts: the European realm, bilateral agreements between the Americans and the Soviets, and in the multilateral form of the CSCE and the MBFR negotiations.³⁶ The latter is the sphere where Canada was able to express its foreign policy interests on the international stage. Canadian officials used these forums to further the détente agenda. In general, between 1968 and 1983 the Trudeau government was a strong proponent of détente. Trudeau came to power with the belief that the hostility of the Cold War needed to be broken.³⁷ He questioned the gravity of the Soviet threat and sought to realign Canadian foreign and defense policies that would first serve national interests. While cultivating closer relations with the Soviet Union, he encouraged the FRG to explore a more “balanced” position on the German division. Trudeau’s international influence

³³ Jaraus, 9.

³⁴ Peter H. Merkl, *German Unification in the European Context* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 61.

³⁵ Timothy Garten Ash discusses the relationship between détente and German reunification in Timothy Garten Ash, *In Europe’s Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (New York: Random House, 1993), 357-377.

³⁶ Keating, 208.

³⁷ J.L. Granatstein and Robert Bothwell, *Pirouette: Pierre Trudeau and Canadian Foreign Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 203.

was often hindered by Canada's limited middle power status; however, his political initiatives were fiercely motivated by his desire to challenge Cold War principles in pursuit of more stable world order.

The Emergence of Détente

The shifting winds in East-West relations first appeared in the mid-1960s. Within the NATO alliance, frustrations had been mounting by the late 1950s against Bonn's rigid Eastern policy which came to be seen as an obstacle to constructive dialogue.³⁸ Within Canada, the desire for improved relations with the USSR increased when Lester Pearson became Prime Minister in 1963. One year later, in a state visit to Canada, Chancellor Ludwig Erhard from the FRG admitted that it was necessary for West Germany to widen agreements with the East.³⁹ With the appointment of Brandt to the foreign ministry in 1966, West Germany began down the path to détente. The easing of tensions in the international sphere was encapsulated in the 1967 NATO Harmel Report that advocated pursuing "the search for progress towards a more stable relationship with the Soviet bloc in which the underlying political issues could be resolved."⁴⁰ The Cold War rhetoric was softening. In Canada, the election of Trudeau in 1968 shifted Canadian foreign policy even further in the direction of détente politics.

Trudeau came to power with the belief that Canadian security and alliance policies needed to be considerably re-examined. He immediately set about challenging Eurocentric, Cold War perceptions that had dominated Canadian foreign policy. It made no sense to him that approximately 10,000 Canadian soldiers and 108 Canadian combat aircraft, with nuclear strike abilities were stationed in an already prosperous West Germany. According to former Canadian

³⁸ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 41.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 46.

diplomat, Jeremy Kinsman, “He didn’t buy the official (NATO) advice that Canada’s alliance obligations or the state of the Cold War removed any choice in the matter.”⁴¹ This prompted him to swiftly conduct a defense review in 1969. In an interview with University of Winnipeg researchers, John Noble, academic and former Canadian diplomat, recalled that Trudeau wanted to bring the entire ground and air forces home. Although he was only able to reduce them by fifty percent, he remained skeptical of military force.⁴² Following the defense review, the remaining 5,000 troops were moved from their base in Soest, in the British zone, to Lahr and Baden-Soellingen in southwestern Germany, now under the American zone.⁴³

Trudeau firmly believed it imperative that Canada play an instrumental role in reducing the danger of East-West direct conflict in Western Europe. Canadian Cold War historian, Robert Bothwell, asserts that the decision to reduce troops in Europe as part of the NATO contingent meant Canada saying, “NATO, while not completely irrelevant, was no longer strategically important as it once had been, and that force reductions, contributing to détente, were a better provision for the future.”⁴⁴ The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 did little to shift Trudeau’s opinion on the decision to move ahead with Canada’s planned military reductions. Trudeau deviated from the Pearsonian diplomacy that had created the postwar multilateral connections of the Cold War era that had come to define Canadian foreign policy.

Members within NATO’s security alliance were not pleased. At the NATO ministerial meeting in Brussels in May 1969, the Canadian delegation was severely criticized for its decision

⁴¹ Jeremy Kinsman, “Who is my Neighbour? Trudeau and Foreign Policy,” *International Journal* 57, no. 1 (2001/2002): 63.

⁴² John Noble, interviewed by Alexander von Plato, Chris Clements, and Hayley Caldwell, Ottawa, January 25, 2013. Noble was a foreign affairs official who served as Director General of the U.S. Relations Bureau, and was appointed Director General of the International Security Bureau. He was also Canada’s ambassador to Greece, Switzerland, and Lichtenstein, among other appointments.

⁴³ Robert Bothwell, *Alliance and Illusion: Canada and the World, 1945-1984* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 291.

⁴⁴ Bothwell, *The Big Chill: Canada and the Cold War*, 89.

to pull out of Germany. The Europeans worried that the Canadian cuts might be a “stalking horse” for American withdrawal.⁴⁵ Brandt was also anxious that Canadian reductions would have negative repercussions for the developing *Ostpolitik*. He did not want the Russians to think that solidarity was loosening within the alliance.⁴⁶ In an interview with Robert Fowler, former Foreign Service diplomat and Deputy Minister of National Defense, Fowler argued that the larger powers within the alliance did not want a middle power like Canada influencing the tide of NATO strategy. He explained, “If Canada suddenly left Germany, then might that cause the Americans, and the Brits to do the same thing. It did not, although the Brits are now leaving Germany, and the Americans effectively left long ago. But nobody wanted little Canada determining the direction.”⁴⁷ Yet, Trudeau was not deterred. He was a political realist when it came to the balance of world power. He recognized it was futile to continue approaching Canadian foreign policy through an anti-communist conservative lens and refocused its intention to creating policies that served Canadian interests first, in keeping with the era of détente.

In the early 1970s, Trudeau relentlessly pursued détente in international affairs. He felt betrayed by India when it exploded a nuclear weapon in 1972 that was made with Canadian materials, prompting him to endorse principles against nuclear proliferation.⁴⁸ Another avenue was his approach towards diplomatic relations with China. Trudeau found it untenable that Canada had refused to recognize the communist government in Beijing, and pressed for negotiations, which were completed in 1970.⁴⁹ He was also interested in cultivating a better relationship with the Soviet Union. Trudeau’s 1970 foreign policy review detailed that Canada

⁴⁵ Granatstein and Bothwell, 27.

⁴⁶ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 52.

⁴⁷ Robert Fowler, interviewed by Alexander von Plato and University of Winnipeg students, Winnipeg and Ottawa via Skype, March 18, 2013. Fowler was a foreign policy advisor for Prime Ministers Trudeau, Turner, and Mulroney. He was appointed Deputy Minister of National Defense, and served as Canada’s ambassador to the UN.

⁴⁸ Interview with John Noble.

⁴⁹ Bothwell, *The Big Chill: Canada and the Cold War*, 90.

had a “substantial interest” in the communist countries of Eastern Europe for the increased benefits of trade, scientific cooperation, and cultural exchanges, including aiding the process of détente.⁵⁰ Trudeau scheduled a state visit to Moscow in 1971 to meet with party head, Leonid Brezhnev. The highlight of the visit was the signing of a bilateral agreement on May 20 that strengthened ties between Canada and the Soviets. In a speech to the House of Commons one week later, Trudeau explained, “I harbour no naïve belief that as a result of this new protocol, our two countries will find themselves suddenly in a relation that will reflect nothing but tender feelings, there remain many fundamental differences between us...but surely the only way to resolve these differences and eliminate these concerns is by increased contact and understanding.”⁵¹ Trudeau’s manoeuvres revealed that Canada was willing to take separate foreign affairs positions from its western allies, particularly the United States, in order to further détente and at the same time assert its independence in the international realm.

Another important link with the Soviets was made through Trudeau’s unique relationship with Alexander Yakovlev, the Soviet ambassador sent to Ottawa in 1973. In Yakovlev, Trudeau found a Soviet official that was a loyal supporter of the communist party, who was also an individual with sound intellect that was both open-minded and willing to contribute to a positive working relationship.⁵² The two men came to know each other well.⁵³ Paul Heinbecker, former Canadian diplomat and ambassador to Germany recollected, “Yakovlev was the only ambassador who really had actually access to Trudeau. He was instrumental in persuading Trudeau that the

⁵⁰ Leigh Sarty, “A Handshake Across the Pole: Canadian-Soviet Relations During the Era of Détente,” in *Canada and the Soviet Experiment: Essays on Canadian Encounters with Russia and the Soviet Union, 1900-1991*, ed. David Davies (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1994), 122.

⁵¹ Pierre Trudeau, Excerpts from a Statement by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on Policy Towards the Soviet Union, May 28, 1971, in *Lifting the Shadow of War*, ed. C. David Crenna (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd., 1987), 11.

⁵² Granatstein and Bothwell, 201.

⁵³ Ivan Head and Pierre Trudeau, *The Canadian Way: Shaping Canada’s Foreign Policy 1968-1984* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Inc., 1995), 260.

situation was dangerous, but it was not necessarily the Russians that were making it dangerous. I would say that Trudeau was inclined to be more understanding of the Russians than either Pearson before him or Mulroney, and others after him.”⁵⁴ Similarly, it appears Trudeau’s views had a significant impact on Yakovlev. Kinsman recalled, “Yakovlev became deeply convinced that the Soviet Union not only was completely inefficient as an economy. It had acquired over time, an insupportable burden of immorality.”⁵⁵ After his decade-long posting to Canada, Yakovlev returned to Moscow and entered Mikhail Gorbachev’s circle of close confidants within the Politburo that were instrumental in the pivotal Soviet reforms of the late 1980s. Yakovlev’s ideas had a direct bearing on Gorbachev’s political directives.⁵⁶

Trudeau’s Opinion on the German Question

Trudeau’s efforts to further détente also extended into the realm of foreign policy related to questions surrounding the German division. In August 1970, Trudeau received an official note from the Department of External Affairs outlining Canada’s policy on the status of the two German states. It argued that in no way should Canada change its policy of refusing to recognize the government in the GDR. The note strongly suggested that any changes to the German situation at this time would only undermine the FRG’s ongoing *Ostpolitik* negotiations with the East.⁵⁷ In the wake of negotiating Canada’s recognition of Communist China, Trudeau felt uncomfortable with continuing a Cold War position that refused to have diplomatic relations with the government in East Berlin. Trudeau responded to the department by saying, “Do we

⁵⁴ Paul Heinbecker, interviewed by Alexander von Plato, Chris Clements, and Karen Brglez, Ottawa, January 21, 2013. Heinbecker served under Trudeau as Director of the U.S. Division in the External Affairs Department, until 1989 when he was appointed as Mulroney’s chief foreign policy advisor and speechwriter. In 1992, he was named ambassador to Germany.

⁵⁵ Jeremy Kinsman, interviewed by Alexander von Plato and University of Winnipeg students, Winnipeg and Victoria via Skype. April 29, 2013. Kinsman was a foreign affairs official, who served as Canadian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and as the Canadian ambassador to the European Union.

⁵⁶ Interview with Paul Heinbecker.

⁵⁷ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 69-72.

want a united Germany? Would it be a stabilizing force in Europe? Were not the Soviets right in keeping Germany divided, unless it were neutralized and disarmed? Shouldn't we persuade our friends to recognize two Germanies now?"⁵⁸ Trudeau was pressing the department to take the lead in its alliance by exploring the possibility of accepting the status of East Germany.

Unwilling to budge, the department's response to the Prime Minister described the GDR as a state that lacked "all the cultural elements necessary for separate nationhood" and the sense of nationalism would not survive if "its inhabitants had a completely free choice."⁵⁹ The department reiterated its stance that the only position worth taking was to continue promoting the integration of the FRG into NATO and the European community. They argued that this integration provided a safeguard for the possibility of a reunified Germany if the two states were to unite in the distant future, since they believed the division of Germany could not be permanently sustained. The note read, "The reunification of Germany within a framework of a more united Europe will no longer be regarded as a threat to peace and security."⁶⁰ The memorandum advocated the continued easing of East-West tensions, while at the same time, aiding the FRG's deepening integration into western structures for the potential political fusion of the two German states. The arguments put forward from the department appeared to placate Trudeau.

However, in talks with Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin in late 1971, Trudeau reiterated his original beliefs on the German question. He mentioned that if Brandt's treaty to recognize the GDR were to fail, Canadian policy would consider new strategic options.⁶¹ The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp, further undermined the traditional position of German

⁵⁸ National Archives. Memorandum for the Prime Minister: Canadian Policy on Divided States – Germany, Korea, Vietnam, December 14, 1970. (RG 25 Vol. 8810. Series 20-1-2-1970. Part 5), quoted in Roy Rempel and Wilhelm Bleek, "Defense and Economic Linkages in Canadian-German Relations: 1969-1982," *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 7, no.3 (2000), 83.

⁵⁹ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 70.

⁶⁰ Roy Rempel and Wilhelm Bleek, "Defense and Economic Linkages in Canadian-German Relations: 1969-1982," *Canadian Foreign Policy* 7, no.3 (2000), 83.

⁶¹ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 71.

policy when he mentioned in an interview on the CBC radio program, *Sunday Magazine*, “No one nowadays assumes that there will be a united Germany...that idea whoever had it is more or less abandoning it now at least any of the principal political factions have [sic].”⁶² These comments greatly distressed officials in the FRG, who were trying to implement their own form of détente policies and needed the full support of their western alliance members.⁶³ For West Germany, the outcome of the détente process was directly correlated to its national question. These ties propelled the FRG to be more cautious, and possibly realistic in its dealings with the East. Trudeau, on the other hand, was able to approach the East-West confrontation from a more distant Canadian perspective. He tended to be idealistic, often challenging the main political objectives of the western alliance. He sought to make bold advances to cut the Cold War confrontation. Despite all of Trudeau’s rhetoric at the start of the 1970s, official Canadian policy did not radically deviate on the German question. Major treaties were soon negotiated and signed between the FRG and the GDR under *Ostpolitik*. Trudeau sent congratulations to Brandt after the signing of the Basic Treaty in May 1972, and three years later following some difficult negotiations over family reunification issues, the Canadian government officially recognized the East German government.⁶⁴ Brandt’s attempts at rapprochement had eventually materialized. Throughout the FRG’s efforts, the Trudeau government had consistently made it clear that it was a strong proponent of normalizing relations with the East. The allied support from Canada helped propel the international mood of détente forward and relaxed the rigid hostility of the previous Cold War era.

⁶² Interview with Mitchell Sharp quoted in a Department of External Affairs Document. Quoted in Rempel, *Counterweights*, 71.

⁶³ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 71.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 227. The Basic treaty (*Grundlagenvertrag*) strove for better relations between the two German states. The FRG agreed to recognize the legitimacy of the East German state, in exchange for a relaxing of travel restrictions to East Germany and increased travel rights for old age citizens exiting the GDR. The East German government also agreed to continue the releasing of political prisoners in exchange for West German currency.

Canadian Involvement in Global Détente

The pursuit of détente in the international sphere reached a pivotal turning point with the creation of the CSCE. As early as 1966, the Soviets had been pressing for an international conference that would give legitimacy to the political and territorial status quo in Central and Eastern Europe, along with increased trade opportunities between East and West.⁶⁵ Brandt's government viewed the idea of a European security conference as another avenue to pursue normalization with the GDR and to help reduce tensions with the East to slowly begin the process of bringing down the Iron Curtain.⁶⁶ The Canadian government was also a vocal proponent for the proposed conference. It saw the conference as a vehicle to strengthen its political and economic ties to Europe, which had been slightly severed by Trudeau's troop reductions.⁶⁷ External Affairs recognized the opportunities that a mutual security conference could offer to help reduce Cold War ideology and increase human contact between the opposing sides. Preparatory talks began in 1972 and a year later, the thirty-five member states agreed on an agenda that consisted of three "baskets". The first two "baskets" dealt with security, economic, and technological cooperation, the third, arguably the most important, involved cooperation in humanitarian issues and human rights.⁶⁸ The Final Act of the CSCE was the signing of the Helsinki Accords where the participating states agreed on the "objective of promoting better relations among themselves and ensuring conditions in which people can live in lasting peace

⁶⁵ Sarty, 128.

⁶⁶ Robert Spencer, "Canada and the Origins of the CSCE," in *Canada and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe*, ed. Robert Spencer (Toronto: Center for International Studies, University of Toronto, 1984), 25-30.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁶⁸ Keating, 210.

free from any attempt against their security.”⁶⁹ While the CSCE negotiations were beginning to take shape, the member states of NATO and the Soviet Union were also negotiating for arms reductions at the MBFR talks. These conferences proved to be the high-water mark for the achievement of cooperation and co-existence throughout the duration of the Cold War stand-off.

Although Canada played a lesser role in the MBFR discussions, it was an active participant within the CSCE. The Canadian delegation for the conference, led by Michael Shenstone and Tom Delworth, adopted a tough negotiation stance on a broad range of issues against the Soviets. In his memoirs, Trudeau explained that “this conference gave us the opportunity to press the Soviets on human rights and the free movement of peoples. The agreement reached in Helsinki was subsequently very important in establishing the legitimacy of dissident groups in Eastern Europe.”⁷⁰ The Canadians, greatly influenced by their domestic concerns over the issue of family reunification, heavily pressured the Soviets in the area of human rights.⁷¹ Their humanitarian approach was directly aligned with the FRG’s conference goals. The Canadians and West Germans worked in close cooperation throughout the process to obtain tangible achievements in East-West relations. The Canadians also supported the FRG’s position that the option of eventual German reunification could not be compromised.⁷² Their working partnership at the conference not only benefitted the bilateral relationship, but their mutual objectives that were achieved with the signing of the Final Act came to be an integral component of dissident growth throughout Eastern Europe that eventually led to the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In retrospect, Kinsman suggested, “So all of that work during the 1970s on

⁶⁹ Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, August 1, 1975, in *Europe Transformed: Documents on the End of the Cold War*, ed. Lawrence Freedman (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990), 85.

⁷⁰ Pierre Trudeau, *Memoirs* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1993), 208.

⁷¹ Keating, 210.

⁷² Rempel, *Counterweights*, 67.

these cultural and information issues which nobody took terribly seriously at the time, in fact became enormously important.”⁷³

Another important development in the German-Canadian relationship to come out of the Helsinki Conference was Trudeau’s meeting with West German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt. Elected the previous year, the two heads of state had not formally met, and became acquainted over a breakfast meeting on July 31. The Chancellor, a social democrat against Cold War militarism, quickly won the respect of Trudeau.⁷⁴ After their initial introduction, a close friendship was formed between the two leaders. Until Schmidt’s departure from the Chancellery in 1982, the two met approximately fifteen times throughout the duration of Schmidt’s service.⁷⁵ As minister of defense, Schmidt had been highly critical of Canada’s decision to reduce its troops in West Germany. He made it his objective to stress to Trudeau the necessity of the western alliance for the security of the Federal Republic. According to historians, J.L Granatstein and Robert Bothwell, Schmidt argued that “the Bundesrepublik (FRG) wanted more than one North American partner.”⁷⁶ Schmidt’s arguments in the late 1970s convinced Trudeau to retain and strengthen Canadian defense interests in NATO. This led Trudeau to agree to the purchase of 138 Leopard tanks from West Germany, and it was Schmidt who convinced Trudeau that it was part of his obligation as a NATO member to allow the alliance to test cruise missiles on Canadian soil.⁷⁷ Cautiously, Trudeau reassessed Canadian defense policies, but also with the hope that it would strengthen Canadian economic ties to the European community.⁷⁸ By the end

⁷³ Interview with Jeremy Kinsman.

⁷⁴ Granatstein and Bothwell, 253.

⁷⁵ Rempel and Bleek, 92.

⁷⁶ Granatstein and Bothwell, 253.

⁷⁷ Keating, 214 and Trudeau, 334.

⁷⁸ Rempel and Bleek, 91.

of the 1970s Trudeau was still advocating détente. However, he had shifted towards a more moderate stance on policies against the Soviet Union within his western alliance.

Last Attempt to Further Peace

After a brief hiatus from public office, Trudeau's Liberals returned with a majority government in the election of February 1980. Trudeau's second term was marked by a sharp downturn in East-West relations. Détente had come to a swift end with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan one year earlier and the election of Ronald Reagan as U.S. President in 1980. By the early 1980s, Cold War rhetoric had drastically increased creating an international climate of heightened tension and uncertainty. U.S. President Ronald Reagan, a believer that the Soviet Union was the "focus of evil in the modern world", massively ramped up the United States military budget.⁷⁹ This became Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, known as Star Wars, created for the sole intention of taking out Soviet targets. The MBFR negotiations proved to be ineffective in slowing down the arms race and the latest CSCE talks in Madrid had produced few results.⁸⁰ Peace protests in the West were unsuccessful in stopping the stationing of the Pershing and cruise missiles in Western Europe, following the deployment of Soviet intermediate-range missiles.⁸¹ The Soviet Union projected instability with the death of Brezhnev, who was replaced by aged Yuri Andropov, who soon died and was replaced by the frail Konstantin Chernenko. The situation severely worsened on October 7, 1983 when the Soviets shot down a commercial

⁷⁹ Ronald Reagan, Speech to the National Association of Evangelicals, March 8, 1983, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: The Presidency of Ronald Reagan 1983* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984), 363-364, quoted in Beth Fischer, "The Trudeau Peace Initiative and the End of the Cold War: Catalyst or Coincidence?" *International Journal* 49, no. 3 (1994): 613.

⁸⁰ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 77.

⁸¹ Bothwell, *Alliance and Illusion*, 385.

Korean airliner killing all 269 individuals on board.⁸² The threat of actual warfare between the superpowers was at an all-time high.

Deeply discouraged by the antagonistic posturing on both sides, Trudeau made it his mission to attempt to lower Cold War tensions. Already in 1982 at a speech given at Notre Dame University, Trudeau called for rational rhetoric, “We must convince each other that our intentions are what we say they are. This cannot be done by isolating ourselves or the Soviets...we must speak to each other.”⁸³ By the fall of 1983, he developed his “peace initiative”. It was a trip intended to last three months while travelling to various Eastern and Western countries, to encourage leaders to persuade the two superpowers to reduce nuclear weapons and help lower tensions.⁸⁴ The public announcement was made in a speech at the University of Guelph on October 27, 1983 where Trudeau explained, “It is my personal purpose to live up to the undertaking to devote our full political resources to reducing the threat of war.”⁸⁵ Many senior officials within the department of External Affairs were skeptical of Trudeau’s ambitious plans and the media coverage was scarce,⁸⁶ yet Trudeau was convinced of the need for middle power intervention and moved forward with his proposed agenda.

Trudeau found approval for his peace initiative from his West German allies. In November, the newly elected Chancellor Helmut Kohl wrote to Trudeau agreeing with him that dialogue between the superpowers was crucial for bettering East-West relations. One month later, Canada’s secretary of state for external affairs, Allan MacEachen, met with West German

⁸² Brett Thompson, “Pierre Elliot Trudeau’s Peace Initiative: 25 Years On,” *International Journal* 64, no.4 (2009):1119.

⁸³ Pierre Trudeau, Remarks by the Prime Minister at the Convocation Ceremony, Notre Dame University, South Bend, May 16, 1982, in *Lifting the Shadow of War*, ed. C. David Crenna (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd., 1987), 41.

⁸⁴ Bothwell, *The Big Chill: Canada and the Cold War*, 100.

⁸⁵ Canadian Department of External Affairs, Pierre Trudeau, Reflections on Peace and Security, University of Guelph, Ontario, *Statements and Speeches*, 83/18, October 27, 1983.

⁸⁶ Thompson, 1125.

Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher at a meeting in Brussels where Genscher explained the FRG's willingness to support political measures that fostered arms control and nuclear disarmament. Genscher reiterated to the Canadians that any breakdown between East and West had reverberations for the German states.⁸⁷ Officials in Bonn were supportive of Trudeau's efforts to engage dialogue and further détente. However, there was some discontent expressed by the West Germans when Trudeau included East Berlin in his tour of Eastern European countries. After his meeting with Erich Honecker, party head of the East German SED, in January 1984, Trudeau stated to the media that the GDR and Canada would work to deepen their bilateral cooperation, "We have asked our officials to work together to identify the areas where we can agree, and this is what I call going beyond the invective and working positively to find areas of agreement."⁸⁸ Trudeau's comments were met with scepticism by the Germans. Roland Foerster, the West German defense attaché in Ottawa, questioned the effectiveness of Trudeau's initiative and suggested it revealed a naivety in his assessment of the reality of the balance of power in international affairs.⁸⁹

This critical viewpoint was shared by others within the western alliance. In a closed session for western leaders at the Williamsburg Summit in May 1983, Trudeau addressed the increasing Cold War tension and suggested to those gathered that "we should be busting our asses for peace". Conservative British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, incredulously responded, "Pierre, you're such a comfort to the Kremlin."⁹⁰ The American response to the peace initiative carried the same patronizing tone. When one official from the Pentagon heard of

⁸⁷ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 79.

⁸⁸ Pierre Trudeau, Transcript of the Prime Minister's News Conference Following a Meeting with East German Leaders, East Berlin, January 31, 1984, in *Lifting the Shadow of War*, ed. C. David Crenna (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd., 1987), 105.

⁸⁹ Roland Foerster, interviewed by Roy Rempel, November 1991, quoted in Rempel, *Counterweights*, 79.

⁹⁰ Interview with John Noble.

Trudeau's plans he retorted, "Oh God, Trudeau's at it again."⁹¹ The Americans believed they did not need help from Trudeau in their maintenance of East-West relations, which they interpreted to be middle power meddling. On the other hand, Trudeau had little regard for Washington and in response to the backlash called them "Pentagon pipsqueaks."⁹² Before Trudeau began his worldwide tour he met with Reagan to convince him of the worth of his mission. Reagan offered little palpable support but wished him "Godspeed" in his efforts.⁹³ Regardless of the criticisms and overall lack of global enthusiasm, Trudeau completed his peace initiative, making it his last attempt at détente before retiring from office in mid-1984.

What was the impact of Trudeau's campaign? It does appear that in light of the international situation, Trudeau deemed it urgent to act as an international peacemaker before his leave from politics, seemingly in contradiction to some of his previous détente policies that tended to downplay the threats of Cold War aggression. His quick turnaround in believing what needed to be done to defuse the hostile situation led to his initiative that was based on the premise that dialogue between leaders could alter the ideological war between superpowers. As Granatstein and Bothwell argue, "he was and remained an adventurer in ideas, certain that he could persuade other leaders to join him in personal involvement in altering the nuclear threat."⁹⁴ Although Trudeau's efforts may have been rather far-reaching for a middle power, nevertheless within a few months after his initiative, military rhetoric between the two sides began to lessen. By 1985 President Reagan and Gorbachev met to discuss the banning of intermediate nuclear weapons, and they changed the whole tone of East-West relations when they met one year later in Reykjavik to establish new measures on arms controls and disarmament. According to Fowler,

⁹¹ Granatstein and Bothwell, 371.

⁹² Interview with Paul Heinbecker.

⁹³ Granatstein and Bothwell, 372.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 375.

who had worked closely with Trudeau on the initiative, “just eighteen months to two years later, Reagan was saying things (at Reykjavik) very similar to what Trudeau had been saying.”⁹⁵

Whether or not a straight line can be drawn from Trudeau’s initiative to Reagan’s political shift, it is clear that by the mid-1980s their views came to be more alike than they were different.

The emergence of *détente* in the late 1960s and its evolution into the 1970s helped prepare the foundation for the easing of East-West relations leading to the eventual disintegration of the Soviet Union. Dialogue and conciliation between the superpowers allowed for the peaceful end of the Cold War and the coming together of the two German states. The influence of Trudeau’s foreign policy on the unification of the German states in 1990 has to be assessed through Trudeau’s overall impact on global *détente*. Throughout his leadership, Trudeau worked tirelessly to encourage the opposing sides to soften their hostile rhetoric and to point away from Cold War confrontations. Trudeau was consistently resistant to viewing the Soviet Union through an anti-communist lens and sought to inject his political will into the distrustful East-West relationship. At times, this meant an inconsistent foreign policy. He came to power questioning the Pearsonian diplomacy of Canadian peacemaking and ended up leaving office following a world-wide peace campaign. Regardless, Trudeau was always adapting his foreign policy in order to further the agenda of *détente*. The normalization of relations between the opposing sides that was achieved through *detente* helped set the stage for the international framework that was needed for the facilitation of German unity to occur at the end of the twentieth century.

⁹⁵ Interview with Robert Fowler.

Chapter II

The Canadian Response to the Eastern European Awakening

In his memoir, Brian Mulroney reflected, “Of all my nearly nine years as prime minister, those two months, November and December 1989 – were among the most exhilarating I was to experience. The world was literally changing in front of our eyes.”⁹⁶ Gorbachev’s “new thinking” in Soviet domestic and foreign policy that was introduced in the latter half of the 1980s encouraged the momentum for political reform throughout Eastern Europe. The rising expectations to change forty years of communist rule erupted in the 1989 civic revolutions. In East Germany, growing popular dissent throughout the summer and fall, developed into a mass peace movement that demanded change from the ruling communist party. On November 9, the Western world watched in awe as East German citizens, penned in for twenty-eight years crossed the border into West Berlin after confused border guards opened the Berlin Wall. The central symbol of the Cold War era began to be dismantled. The revolutionary events of 1989 signalled the beginning of the transformation process that ended the German division.

However, the Canadians were slow to respond to these drastic changes taking place in the East. Mulroney’s Progressive Conservative government had been apprehensive about accepting the reform initiatives that emerged from the Soviet Union in the second half of the 1980s. Gorbachev’s reversal of key Soviet strategy softened East-West tensions, but officials in Ottawa maintained a high level of skepticism towards the Soviet initiatives. As late as January 1989, Canadian foreign policy statements continued to exhibit “old Cold War” thinking that divided the world into two opposing camps. As momentum was building in Eastern Europe, Mulroney was preoccupied with bettering relations with the Americans. Only by the spring, did the

⁹⁶ Brian Mulroney, *Memoirs, 1939-1993* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2007), 709.

Canadians begin to embrace Gorbachev's success. It was not until Mulroney paid an official visit to the Soviet Union in November that he fully expressed a willingness to strengthen the bilateral ties between the countries and assist in Soviet reform. As 1989 came to a close, the Canadian government had finally caught up with the rest of the western allies in recognizing the potential to overcome the East-West confrontation. With the Berlin Wall in ruins, the question of Germany unity was now propelled to the forefront of the international agenda. The Canadian government was ready to be involved in the discussions on the rebuilding of Europe, but its earlier, cautious approach positioned it within the western alliance as a helpful follower, instead of a proactive initiator.

The Transition to Conservatism

In the heightened hostility of the renewed Cold War, Canadians ushered in a Conservative era with the election of Brian Mulroney on September 17, 1984. Mulroney, who had been deeply critical of the Trudeau government sought to reverse several of its foreign policy positions. He came to office with the intention to “refurbish” Canadian-American relations, and introduce a “new era of civility”, that he felt had been damaged under the Liberals.⁹⁷ To achieve this, he cultivated close relationships with President Reagan, and his successor, George H.W. Bush, meeting regularly at formal summits and informal get-togethers.⁹⁸ He wanted to be a better ally, and to secure this aim he chose to be less suspicious of American intentions and largely agreed with them on global issues. According to Heinbecker, who helped create Mulroney's foreign policy, the Conservative policy position became, “A – we're open for

⁹⁷ David Taras, “Brian Mulroney's Foreign Policy: Something for Everyone,” *The Round Table* 293 (1985):39.

⁹⁸ Gaetan Lavertu, interviewed by Alexander von Plato, Stephen Spence, and Hayley Caldwell, Ottawa, January 22, 2013. Lavertu was a foreign affairs official that served as Director General of Foreign Intelligence, Assistant Deputy Minister for Political Affairs and International Security, Associate Deputy Minister, and finally as Deputy Minister. He served as ambassador abroad, primarily in Europe and Latin America.

business, and B – we’re going to give our American friends the benefit of the doubt. Rather than being critical, we’re going to assume they’re right, until we have evidence that they’re wrong.”⁹⁹

The two countries were further integrated when Mulroney’s government signed the North American Free Trade Agreement at the end of his second term.¹⁰⁰

Consistent with their desire to be a supportive ally, the Conservatives initial security policy sought to expand Canada’s commitment to its western alliance during the heightened Cold War competition. In his election campaign, Mulroney promised to spend more of the national budget on defense and reassured his western allies that Canada “would pull its weight within the NATO alliance.”¹⁰¹ This was fulfilled one year later in a speech to the Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control when he stated, “we have decided to strengthen our military presence in Europe as a further contribution to the alliance’s collective defense and deterrence of military aggression.”¹⁰² Mulroney was also quick to denounce the actions of the Soviet Union. While Trudeau had claimed the Soviet takedown of the Korean airliner in 1983 was an accident, Mulroney called it “an act of cold-blooded murder.” He criticized the Soviet Union, calling it a “slave state”, and promised to work for the cause of Eastern Europeans in a speech at the international convention of Estonians in July 1984.¹⁰³

Although the Conservatives’ policies appeared to closely model the American positions throughout the 1980s, they did not always align. Canada deviated from Washington on several

⁹⁹ Interview with Paul Heinbecker.

¹⁰⁰ Nelson Michaud and Kim Richard Nossal, “The Conservative Era in Canadian Foreign Policy, 1984-93,” in *Diplomatic Departures: The Conservative Era in Canadian Foreign Policy, 1984-1993*, ed. Nelson Michaud and Kim Richard Nossal (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2001), 8.

¹⁰¹ Ottawa Citizen, 25 September 1984, quoted in *Diplomatic Departures: The Conservative Era in Canadian Foreign Policy, 1984-1993*, ed. Nelson Michaud and Kim Richard Nossal (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2001), 14.

¹⁰² Canadian Department of External Affairs, Brian Mulroney, In Pursuit of Peace, Ottawa, Ontario, *Statements and Speeches*, 85/20, October 31, 1985.

¹⁰³ Nelson Michaud and Kim Richard Nossal, “Out of the Blue: The Mulroney Legacy in Foreign Policy,” in *Transforming the Nation: Canada and Brian Mulroney*, ed. Raymond B. Blake (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2007), 115.

key matters. The Mulroney government declined to be involved in Reagan's Star Wars program.¹⁰⁴ Another disparity with respect to US policy was Mulroney's commitment to total sanctions against South Africa's Apartheid Regime. In addition, the governments differed in their approaches to human rights, arctic sovereignty, the United Nations, Cuba, and the American invasion of Nicaragua.¹⁰⁵ Canadian and American foreign policy was not without its differences, yet in the climate of the re-intensified Cold War, Mulroney worked to deepen the trust with his western allies and maintained a close working relationship with the Americans.

International relations shifted towards a spirit of cooperation with the Soviet election of Gorbachev to General Secretary in March 1985. Gorbachev infused optimism into the stagnant, hostile relationship between East and West. Even before his rise to power, he was discussing the need for "deep transformations in the Soviet economy" and the need for "wide, prompt, and frank information" to be available throughout the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁶ His flexibility and openness was witnessed by Canadians in 1983 when he visited as Soviet Minister of Agriculture. According to interviewee Gaetan Lavertu, former Director General of Foreign Intelligence, "Gorbachev asked all kinds of interesting questions and communicated fairly openly with his Canadian interlocutors. And that's when we realized Mr. Gorbachev was someone else. He was different from the traditional politburo member."¹⁰⁷ At home, he intended to restructure the Soviet economy with his introduction of "perestroika", and he encouraged a policy of openness, known as "glasnost". His attempts to reform existing socialism opened the door for change in domestic and foreign policy, and stirred hope throughout Eastern Europe. New life was breathed

¹⁰⁴ Michaud and Nossal, *The Conservative Era in Canadian Foreign Policy*, 14.

¹⁰⁵ Denis Stairs, "Architects or Engineers? The Conservatives and Foreign Policy," in *Diplomatic Departures: The Conservative Era in Canadian Foreign Policy, 1984-1993*, ed. Nelson Michaud and Kim Richard Nossal (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2001), 32.

¹⁰⁶ Gale Stokes, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down: Collapse and Rebirth in Eastern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 79.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Gaetan Lavertu.

into the Cold War conflict in the mid-1980s with the signing of several significant Soviet-American treaties. The two sides met in 1985, 1986, and 1987 to discuss the banning of intermediate nuclear weapons.¹⁰⁸ The Soviet policy of hostility towards the West was lessening.

Canadian foreign policy moved with the trend towards improved dealings with the Soviet Union, but the department remained leery that the Soviet reforms would drastically transform the long-standing East-West tensions. Canadian-Soviet relations saw initial improvement in the areas of academic and sports exchange programs, cooperation in the Arctic and in the areas of fisheries, an increasing number of joint business programs, including an invitation for Joe Clark, the new Secretary of State for External Affairs, to visit the Soviet Union in spring 1985.¹⁰⁹ However, his eight-day visit with Soviet foreign minister, Andrei Gromyko, left Clark doubtful that real change was present in Soviet attitudes. When he tried to question Gromyko on the state of human rights violations, he was promptly told, “We do not discuss our internal matters with any state at all, so let’s pass on to other questions.”¹¹⁰ Clark was equally disheartened by the similarly hard-line approach of Politburo member, Vitalii Vorotnikov, on his state visit to Canada several months later.¹¹¹ It was only in the following year that the Conservatives were finally exposed to Gorbachev’s “new thinking” in a Soviet follow-up visit to Ottawa in October 1986, this time made by the newly appointed foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze. Shevardnadze had come prepared to reveal the revitalized face of Soviet bureaucracy and to encourage bilateral exchange with Canada. Encouraged by the talks, Clark described his meetings with the new foreign minister as being, “frank and more open than I believe has been

¹⁰⁸ Bothwell, *The Big Chill: Canada and the Cold War*, 104.

¹⁰⁹ Lenard J. Cohen, “The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in Transition: Trends and Implications for Canada,” in *Canada Among Nations 1989: The Challenge of Change*, ed. Maureen Appel Molot and Fen Osler Hampson (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1990), 34.

¹¹⁰ William Johnson, “Clark Raises Issue on Soviet Visit Gromyko Spurns Human Rights Appeal.” *Globe and Mail*, April 4, 1985 sec. A.1.

¹¹¹ Sarty, 155.

the case before” and that “this process of building trust is far from finished.”¹¹² Yet, the Conservatives’ reluctance to accept the changes in Soviet doctrine was evident at the CSCE conference in Vienna one month later. Clark harshly rebuked the Soviet Union when he stated in his speech, “And we cannot forget that one participating state has over the past seven years, violated virtually all of the principles guiding relations between states by its continuing military intervention in Afghanistan.”¹¹³ Over the course of the next three years, as the Soviets commitment to their new political thinking steadily increased, the Mulroney administration struggled to keep pace with the Soviet thaw.

This was apparent with the release of the Conservatives’ White Paper on Defense, issued in the summer of 1987. As officials in Washington and Moscow were pledging to reduce their nuclear forces, Canadian defense officials were making plans for a drastic increase in military spending. Published by defense minister, Perrin Beatty, the report disregarded the encouraging reforms emerging from the Soviet Union and advocated for “a more sober approach to international relations and the needs of a security policy.”¹¹⁴ The White Paper asserted that the leaders of the Soviet Union continued to view the world as two hostile camps, and that they sought “the dissolution of NATO, the neutralization of non-communist Europe, and the weakening of the West as a whole.”¹¹⁵ Built on this premise, the Paper called for an increase in defense spending that would cover the purchase of a host of new equipment and personnel. According to Fowler, the White Paper, which was titled “Challenge and Commitment”, was all

¹¹² Canadian Department of External Affairs, Joe Clark, Statement in the House of Commons on USA-Soviet Arms Control Talks, Ottawa, Ontario, *Statements and Speeches*, October 21, 1986.

¹¹³ Canadian Department of External Affairs, Joe Clark, Notes for a Speech at the Vienna Follow-up Meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Ottawa, Ontario, *Statements and Speeches*, November 5, 1986.

¹¹⁴ Norrin M. Ripsman, “Big Eyes and Empty Pockets: The Two Phases of Conservative Defense Policy,” in *Diplomatic Departures: The Conservative Era in Canadian Foreign Policy, 1984-1993*, ed. Nelson Michaud and Kim Richard Nossal (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2001), 101.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 101.

about “restoring the fortunes of Canada’s defense establishment, acquiring aircraft and building remote bases in the north, to protect North America from Soviet bombers, the building of fleets of nuclear powered submarines, and continuing to support the watch on the Rhine with enthusiasm and commitment.”¹¹⁶ The report was a clear indication that the Conservatives were convinced that détente had been a failure, and their approach was to deepen Canada’s participation within its western alliance. While the four previous White Papers of the last four decades aimed to reduce the military budget, the Conservatives’ 1987 report became the first to wholly support an increase in defense spending based on Cold War antagonisms.¹¹⁷

Possibly, the formulation of the 1987 White Paper was influenced by an earlier military strategy that had been proposed by the department of defense during the early Mulroney years, but that had been poorly received by the international community. In 1985, Erik Nielsen, newly appointed chief of defense, in an effort to reorganize Canada’s military efforts, recommended for budgetary reasons that Canada should withdraw its land and air forces from Germany and reposition much of the force in northern Norway.¹¹⁸ This plan was, however, widely criticized amongst the European allies. Britain was strongly against the idea of Canadian withdrawal and the Germans “preferred the Canadians to stay right where they were.”¹¹⁹ Academic Nelson Michaud also contends that Kohl was having conscription problems within the FRG and did not favour Canadian withdrawal at this time.¹²⁰ Due to the lack of allied support, the idea of reorganizing Canadian forces in Europe was quickly abandoned. Canadian officials were once again confronted by their limitations as a middle power within their western alliance. Two years

¹¹⁶ Interview with Robert Fowler.

¹¹⁷ Nelson Michaud, “Bureaucratic Politics and the Making of the 1987 Defense White Paper,” in *Diplomatic Departures: The Conservative Era in Canadian Foreign Policy, 1984-1993*, ed. Nelson Michaud and Kim Richard Nossal (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2001), 261.

¹¹⁸ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 150.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 154.

¹²⁰ Michaud, *Bureaucratic Politics and the Making of the 1987 Defense White Paper*, 263.

after the release of the Nielsen proposal, the defense department published its 1987 White Paper, and it was clear that it had no intentions of unsettling its allies with its latest defense plans. The report's suggestion to increase Canada's 5500-person wartime commitment to 16,500 persons was a resounding indication of support for re-equipping the Canadian troops in Germany. The Conservative government endorsed the White Paper since it showcased its intentions to reaffirm its commitment to NATO, yet the release was poorly timed as the Gorbachev revolution was quickly altering East-West relations by the late 1980s. Even some German officials, although pleased with the Canadian commitment, expressed skepticism for the ambitious plans as the pace of reform was quickening in the East.¹²¹

The Beginning of the German Transformation

West Germans experienced their own shift towards conservative politics when the Christian Democratic Party (CDU) regained power under the leadership of Helmut Kohl in 1982. Kohl represented the postwar generation as he became the first chancellor that had been too young to fight in the Second World War.¹²² Armed with a doctorate in history, he had an unquestioned sense of German nationality on state building.¹²³ He was convinced that the East and the West were not equivalent systems and he desired the attainment of a unified Germany fully aligned with its western allies. Once chancellor, he settled into close cooperation with his fellow western leaders, establishing a strong rapport with U.S. and French Presidents, and Prime Minister Mulroney.¹²⁴ He strengthened the FRG's commitment to NATO, frustrating his left-wing opposition when he agreed to allow the stationing of medium-range missiles on West

¹²¹ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 156.

¹²² Zelikow and Rice, 76.

¹²³ Alexander von Plato, *Die Vereinigung Deutschlands – ein weltpolitisches Machtspiel*, (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2003), 362, 370.

¹²⁴ Interview with Robert Fowler.

German territory in 1983.¹²⁵ Although Kohl had strong convictions on the German question, he was restrained by the legacy of his predecessor's foreign politics. Even though he had once strongly argued against *Ostpolitik*, by the 1980s the public consensus thought that this was the most efficient policy for the FRG to maintain a working relationship with East Germany, forcing Kohl to adopt this position for his foreign policy.¹²⁶ He also kept on the previous foreign minister from the former government, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who was inclined to take a centrist position in dialoguing with the East. In an effort to further improve inner-German relations, Bonn extended its cooperation to the East Germans in the form of payments to keep the struggling state afloat. Kohl worked in his early years to help normalize relations with the GDR with the hope of preserving a semblance of common national unity, since territorial unification seemed highly improbable.

By 1989, instability was quickly gaining momentum throughout Eastern Europe. Gorbachev's efforts to transform Soviet foreign policy with his new set of political priorities were encouraging popular movements for reform. The Soviet leader revealed his "new thinking" to the U.N. in a speech in December 1988, when he renounced the use of Soviet military intervention to resolve global conflicts and announced its commitment to reduce military strength. In addition, the Soviets began their withdrawal from Afghanistan that same year.¹²⁷ Encouraged by the positive response from the international community, Gorbachev went further, advocating for a "common European home" based on a collective security framework derived from the CSCE process. Since he had reassured Eastern Europe that they could go their own way

¹²⁵ James J. Sheehan, "The Transformation of Europe and the End of the Cold War," in *The Fall of the Berlin Wall: The Revolutionary Legacy of 1989*, ed. Jeffrey A. Engel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 47.

¹²⁶ Zelikow and Rice, 77.

¹²⁷ William Taubman and Svetlana Savranskaya, "If a Wall Fell in Berlin and Moscow Hardly Noticed Would it Still Make a Noise?" in *The Fall of the Berlin Wall: The Revolutionary Legacy of 1989*, ed. Jeffrey A. Engel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 76.

without the threat of Soviet intervention, the governments in Poland and Hungary began to use Gorbachev's bold new policies to justify domestic reforms that strayed from the traditional communist framework. By the late 1980s, Moscow sat back as both of these countries openly challenged communist rule by intensifying their own political and economic reforms.

Unlike their progressive Eastern bloc neighbours, the leadership in the GDR refused to initiate any reform, further inciting discord among its citizens. The dissident movement in East Germany had been gaining increasing popularity since the early 1980s over frustrations with the renewed Cold War and the militarization of society. Small opposition groups had gathered in the Protestant churches throughout East Germany to dialogue for peace efforts. With the advent of Gorbachev in 1985, these groups shifted their focus to advocate for democratic reforms and environmental concerns.¹²⁸ The onset of Gorbachev's reforms appealed to the growing opposition movement who wanted to engage in dialogue with the SED over the existing version of East German socialism. However, Honecker refused to move with the tide of reform. The communist veterans of East Germany chose to ignore their domestic problems and interpret the Soviet thaw as an invitation to steer their own hard lined course, while ignoring domestic discontent. Kurt Hager, a member of the SED, commented that Berlin did not need to change its wallpaper just because its neighbours were remodelling.¹²⁹ Gorbachev grew increasingly frustrated with Honecker's blatant refusal to implement domestic reform to help appease the increasing unrest.

The Soviet political shift allowed for increased dialogue between East and West. Chancellor Kohl visited Moscow in October 1988 to discuss the German question and closer economic cooperation. Although there were no major breakthroughs, the trip was highly

¹²⁸ Lothar Kettenacker, *Germany 1989: In the Aftermath of the Cold War* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2009), 91.

¹²⁹ Jarausch, 10.

significant for the FRG's relationship with the Soviets. Historian Lothar Kettenacker stated that the trip "marked a new departure in relations between the countries and, above all, between the two leaders, who now established a close rapport."¹³⁰ In addition, in January 1989, the newly installed President Bush (Sr.) declared a "break" in American-Soviet relations to reevaluate the changes that were transpiring throughout Eastern Europe. For the British, Thatcher had established a trustworthy relationship with Gorbachev since the mid-1980s.¹³¹

However, the Canadians were reluctant to embrace the Gorbachev revolution. As late as January 1989, Clark gave a speech at the University of Calgary where he suggested that the western allies should "avoid euphoria regarding Soviet intentions and to measure accomplishments not statements." Although he mentioned he was encouraged by Gorbachev's policies, he recommended that the West exercise caution in their acceptance of Soviet proposals.¹³² His speech was an endorsement to "go slow" for any changes in Canadian-Soviet relations and was a reminder for Canadians not to forget the history of the Soviet system. According to academic, Lenard Cohen, Clark's western Canadian orientation and his connection to conservatives of Eastern European descent directly influenced his hard line approach towards the Soviet Union.¹³³ The scepticism he expressed towards *perestroika* was also held by some of the members in the upper ranks of the Department of Defense and External Affairs.¹³⁴ Along with their reservations towards Europe, the Conservatives were also preoccupied throughout 1987-88 with the U.S. over Free Trade Negotiations. These factors pushed the events in Europe to the bottom of the Tory government's priority list.

¹³⁰ Kettenacker, 93.

¹³¹ Taubman and Savranskaya, 74, 86.

¹³² Canadian Department of External Affairs, Joe Clark, *East-West Relations: The Way Ahead*, Calgary, Alberta, *Statements and Speeches*, 89/2, January 13, 1989.

¹³³ Cohen, 36.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 36-37.

Although Canadian acceptance of Soviet initiatives lagged behind its Western allies at the start of 1989, the pace in Eastern Europe was quickly accelerating. On May 2, Hungary began to dismantle its border with Austria, initiating a flood of East German refugees attempting to flee to the West. Over the summer months, thousands of East German citizens managed to escape through the opened Hungarian border. The GDR leadership was furious with the Hungarian border stunt. Erich Mielke, the chief of the East German secret police, the Stasi, angrily retorted, “Hungary is betraying socialism.”¹³⁵ The crisis for the GDR increased when some of the travellers took shelter in the West German embassies in Prague, Warsaw, and Budapest after being blocked at the Hungarian border. In Prague alone, over three thousand people set up camp at the embassy in the Lobkowitz palace. Embarrassed by the situation, the Soviets pressured Honecker to let the West Germans intervene. After secret negotiations between the Soviets and the foreign ministry of the FRG, both parties agreed to have prepared trains take the East German refugees from Prague to West Germany. In his memoir, Genscher fondly described the highly emotional spectacle when he delivered the news to the refugees, “It was an unforgettable moment for me as well as for those gathered at the embassy - the thaw had originated in Prague - how long I had waited for that moment.”¹³⁶ By the end of September some 30,000 East Germans had departed for the West through the Hungarian opening.¹³⁷

The mass exodus of East Germans began to elicit a response from the citizens determined to stay. On September 4, some 1200 protestors demonstrated for freedom following the Monday night peace prayers at the Nikolaikirche in Leipzig.¹³⁸ By the end of September, the Monday

¹³⁵ Stephen Kotkin, *Uncivil Society: 1989 and the Implosion of the Communist Establishment* (New York: Modern Library, 2009), 57.

¹³⁶ Hans-Dietrich Genscher, *Rebuilding a House Divided: A Memoir by the Architect of Germany's Reunification* (New York: Broadway Books, 1995), 12.

¹³⁷ Kettenacker, 101.

¹³⁸ Kotkin, 57.

night demonstrations had grown by the thousands. Instead of fleeing to the West, the protestors rallying cry became “We’re staying here” (*Wir bleiben hier*) and “We are the people” (*Wir sind das Volk*).¹³⁹ Motivated by the movement in Leipzig similar demonstrations sprung up in neighbouring East German cities. Revolutionary fever was spreading throughout the GDR. On October 7, with Gorbachev in attendance, the regime celebrated its fortieth anniversary. At the official parade, counterdemonstrators were attacked as they shouted “Gorby” and “Stasi state.”¹⁴⁰ During his state visit, Gorbachev warned the authorities that the Red Army would not intervene to quell their domestic unrest. Two days later, the state prepared to violently crackdown on the Monday peace prayers in Leipzig. On October 9, 3000 riot police, 3000 regular army troops and 500 “party militia” were stationed around the Leipzig churches.¹⁴¹ Mielke stated, “I will now once and for all deploy my special troops, and will show that our authority still has teeth.”¹⁴² Although the threat of violence was looming, 70, 000 demonstrations turned up for the evening prayer service. The protest ended peacefully as the order for bloodshed never materialized. By the end of October, the protests throughout the GDR had grown to half-a-million citizens.¹⁴³ Dissatisfied with Honecker’s leadership in the face of domestic turmoil, the Politburo replaced Honecker with the younger SED member, Egon Krenz, as the month came to a close.

However, the citizens were not satisfied. Seen as part of the old party gang, Krenz was immediately distrusted by East Germans. On October 23, more than 200, 000 demonstrators took to the streets to denounce his corrupt election.¹⁴⁴ The next day, the SED tried to invoke new travel laws, but they were still too restrictive to appease the masses. On November 4, nearly one

¹³⁹ Maier, 140-143.

¹⁴⁰ Kotkin, 58.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 58

¹⁴² David Childs and Richard Popplewell, *The Stasi: The East German Intelligence and Security Service* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 188.

¹⁴³ Kettenacker, 107.

¹⁴⁴ Kotkin, 61.

million people protested in the state capital for an end to the oppressive domestic policies whose slogan had now become “We are one people” (*Wir sind ein Volk*).¹⁴⁵ Desperate to bring order to the situation, the top leadership announced a “new” set of travel regulations on November 9. Gunter Schabowski, a leader of the East German politburo, was scheduled to deliver the details of the latest rules at a press conference later that evening. Having missed the Politburo meeting where the details were determined and not having read the memo beforehand, in response to a journalist’s question, he announced that it was “possible for every citizen” to “leave the GDR” through any border crossing. When questioned when the regulation went into effect, Schabowski answered, “immediately, right away.”¹⁴⁶ Upon hearing the news, East Germans began amassing at their borders clamouring for the guards to open them. The confused border guards called their superiors for directions, but by 10:30 pm with no clear command they went ahead and opened the borders. In a moment of misunderstanding, the central symbol of the Cold War era, the Berlin Wall, was hastily dismantled.

After the Fall of the Wall

Bonn was completely caught off guard by the wall’s collapse. Kohl and Genscher were away on a state visit to Poland to meet with the new Prime Minister Tadeusz Masowiecki when the wall was breached. To the Prime Minister’s dismay, Kohl abruptly cut his visit short and flew to West Berlin on a chartered American flight to give a speech at the Schoneberg City Hall. Filled with emotion Kohl addressed the crowds, “In this spirit I say to all of you in the GDR: You do not stand alone! We stand at your side! We are and remain one nation, and we belong

¹⁴⁵ Kotkin, 61 and Maier, 143.

¹⁴⁶ Mary Elise Sarotte, *1989: The Struggle to Create Post-Cold War Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 37.

together.”¹⁴⁷ Kohl’s emotional appeal hinted at the notion of unification.

Kohl had been party to escalating rhetoric regarding German unity as early as spring 1989. The newly elected Bush administration had decided it was time to initiate a new European policy with German unification as a central feature. Uncomfortable with growing Soviet influence in Europe, the Americans discussed strategies to stem its influence and further its own involvement in European affairs. They wanted to propose a “commonwealth of free nations”, as an alternative to Gorbachev’s “common European house.”¹⁴⁸ The Bush Administration’s goal was a unified Germany under NATO that would extend NATO’s influence throughout Europe. Advisor Condoleezza Rice admitted, “It is true that the United States really had only one concern – and that was that German unification not destroys NATO. Because NATO was the force for peace in Germany, it was America’s anchor in Europe.”¹⁴⁹ In May, Bush gave a speech in Mainz where he proclaimed, “Let Germany be whole and free, and let Berlin be next.”¹⁵⁰ He also sent a private letter to Kohl that same month stating there is a “historic opportunity” to change the German relationship.¹⁵¹ In retrospect, FRG politicians from this period were uncomfortable to suggest that the Americans were ahead of them in their foreign policy, but in spring 1989 it was Bush that was convincing Kohl to take the offensive.¹⁵²

By May, the Canadians had caught up with the developments in Eastern Europe. In a speech to the Canadian Club on May 3, Clark stated that Gorbachev’s reforms have created “a genuine watershed in modern history” and that “real change is occurring in the Soviet Union,

¹⁴⁷ Speeches at the Schöneberg City Hall in West Berlin, November 10, 1989 in *German Unification and its Discontents: Documents from the Peaceful Revolution*, ed. Richard T. Gray and Sabine Wilke (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996), 66.

¹⁴⁸ von Plato, 20.

¹⁴⁹ Condoleezza Rice, interviewed by Alexander von Plato, Stanford University, September 17, 1999.

¹⁵⁰ Speech by President George Bush in Mainz, West Germany, May 31, 1989 in *Europe Transformed: Documents on the End of the Cold War*, ed. Lawrence Freedman (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990), 289-294.

¹⁵¹ von Plato, 27.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 22.

holding the prospect of a transformation in East/West relations.”¹⁵³ Heralding a new step in Canadian-Soviet affairs, he announced Mulroney would embark on a trip to Moscow in the fall to commend Soviet efforts and contribute to economic reform. By the time, Mulroney arrived in the Soviet Union on November 20 the Berlin Wall had collapsed marking a turning point in international relations. The recent events in the GDR had been both electrifying and unnerving for the leaders of the Four Powers.

In this climate of heightened uncertainty, a portion of Mulroney’s visit became devoted to discussing the German question. Over the phone just a week earlier, Bush had asked Mulroney to pass on a private message to Gorbachev, “Tell him, Brian that I will not posture on the wall.”¹⁵⁴ Mulroney would later describe Bush’s prudence towards the German revolution as “perhaps one of his finest moments as president.”¹⁵⁵ After passing on Bush’s message to Gorbachev, he also had extensive meetings with Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov, who made it abundantly clear to the Canadians that the Soviets were against German reunification. Just days after his Soviet trip, Mulroney flew to Washington to inform the Americans of his talks. After praising Gorbachev’s willingness to enact reforms and insisting he was there to stay, he relayed to Bush that “he had detected an overwhelming hatred among the Soviets for the thought of German reunification, and that Gorbachev had likened it to eating “unripened fruit.”¹⁵⁶ He suggested to Bush that he should use his upcoming meetings in Malta with Gorbachev as a genuine opportunity to work for peace. In the uncertain international climate following the wall’s collapse, an important component of Mulroney’s trip was being able to mediate between the major powers on the German question.

¹⁵³ Canadian Department of External Affairs, Speech by Joe Clark Secretary of State for External Affairs to the Canadian Club, Toronto, Ontario, *Statements and Speeches*, 89/12, May 3, 1989.

¹⁵⁴ Mulroney, 699.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 699.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 707.

The trip was also significant because it signalled Canada's complete acceptance of Gorbachev's cause. The Conservatives had finally cast their doubts aside and agreed to assist in Soviet reform. Mulroney took 240 business people with him to discuss potential investment opportunities with the Soviets. Canadians entered into seven new business ventures and agreed to invest one billion CAD into the future Soviet economy. In addition, thirteen inter-government agreements were reached that ranged across a variety of fields.¹⁵⁷ However, the most important agreement was the political declaration signed on November 21 which stated that both nations would agree to "consult and cooperate" on pressing future global issues. According to Canadian-Soviet scholar, Leigh Sarty, "For Ottawa, the declaration signalled a readiness to put the lingering tensions of the 1980s behind it and assume Canada's rightful place as a leading proponent of East-West accommodation."¹⁵⁸ Moscow saw the agreements reached with the Canadians as another useful channel to achieve stability and further its means within the global arena. Mulroney's trip to Moscow was the component that propelled the Canadians to be on par with their western allies in recognizing the potential to create a new post-Cold War order.

For Kohl, this meant a united Germany that was integrated into the European Community. On November 21, Soviet scout Nikolai Portugalow handed Kohl's principle foreign policy advisor, Horst Teltschik, a "non-paper" outlining the range of issues that needed to be examined before the Soviets would agree to unification, such as a peace treaty and determining military alliances. Bonn interpreted this paper to mean that Moscow was already thinking about unification, when in actuality it had been a Soviet misunderstanding.¹⁵⁹ In fact, it had only been a copy of Portugalow's personal notes on the matter. This piece of information pushed Teltschik to begin drafting the "Ten Point Program" which Kohl presented to the Bundestag on November

¹⁵⁷ Sarty, 158.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 158.

¹⁵⁹ von Plato, 418.

28. The document was kept top secret from all western allies, as Bush had been the only person briefed. Even Kohl's foreign minister, Genscher, had been excluded from the inside circle. The gradual plan outlined for the two confederative structures to become one eventual federal system closely linked to the European community.¹⁶⁰ No timetable was officially proposed, but Kohl envisioned somewhere between five to ten years. Kohl also emphasized that the unified Germany would be further integrated into the European Community (EC), and that the EC could move into Eastern Europe. He stated, "The EC must not end on the Elbe, but must remain open to the East."¹⁶¹ However, there was no word about NATO and no word about the German-Polish border.

Yet the Americans gave no doubt as to the security plans they supported for a united Germany. One day later, Bush ratified Kohl's speech when he announced his "Four Principles" in Washington. The American government made it clear from its points that they envisioned and accepted a united Germany in NATO. Historian Alexander von Plato argues that because of these principles, "reunification was in a way validated by Washington, which left the West European critics little room to differ; since for varying reasons the Western European heads of government who ranged from tentative to diffident, were made to see NATO reasoning by Washington."¹⁶² It was difficult for the western allies to argue against a plan that would strengthen NATO, their own military alliance. Lavertu recounted with assurance that, the Canadians were also in agreement with this plan, "From the beginning Mulroney was favourable to German reunification" and that "NATO was one of the pillars of our security policy in Europe

¹⁶⁰ von Plato, 138

¹⁶¹Speech by Chancellor Kohl to the Bundestag on Intra-German Relations, November 28, 1989 in *Europe Transformed: Documents on the End of the Cold War*, ed. Lawrence Freedman (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 372-376.

¹⁶² von Plato, 418.

and whatever happened we had to protect NATO.”¹⁶³ Only a few weeks later at the NATO summit in Brussels, Kohl publicly pledged his unwavering loyalty to the security organization.¹⁶⁴ By the end of November, Kohl’s western-aligned and European integrated unification plan had become his central agenda.

The Soviets were not impressed with Bonn’s bold plans as politics in the GDR was unraveling rapidly. On December 1 the entire Politburo and Central Committee in the GDR resigned. Hans Modrow, a reformer within the SED, was vaulted to the position of party boss to replace Krenz. Modrow struggled to gain control of the situation as civil authority throughout the country began to break down. He accepted some of Kohl’s ten point program, but rejected the offer of unification. In Moscow, Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had dropped their conciliatory tones towards the FRG when they met with Genscher on December 5. Although he tried to reassure them that the ten points were a proposal, not a demand, Gorbachev responded angrily, “Never mind all of that, the German chancellor was treating citizens of the GDR as if they were his subjects.” Shevardnadze dramatically added, “Even Hitler didn’t permit himself this.”¹⁶⁵ The visit concluded on tense terms. By the end of December, the Soviets struggled to keep pace with what appeared to be a West German takeover of the GDR. Gorbachev had no plans to deal with the economic collapse of the GDR and was unprepared for the West’s rapid demands for impending unification. The Soviet government was beginning to recognize the need to regain some control of the German situation, rather than further attempting to stall the process.

As 1989 came to a close, the future of a divided Germany was now in question. West Germany was attempting to convince its western allies of its plan to push for eventual German unity, while the Soviets were struggling to determine their approach to the quickening change of

¹⁶³ Interview with Gaetan Lavertu.

¹⁶⁴ Kettenacker, 138.

¹⁶⁵ Zelikow and Rice, 136.

events in the GDR. The Canadians had finally abandoned the concept of the Soviet Union as their main political adversary. They committed to assisting Soviet reform, recognizing its potential to help cease the longstanding East-West confrontation. Yet in those early weeks following the wall's collapse, Mulroney never wavered in his personal commitment to Kohl and his western oriented unification plans. By the end of the revolutionary year, as governments began discussing possibilities for a new global order, particularly on how to deal with the German situation, Canada was prepared to use its middle power standing on the international stage to be a participant in the process of rebuilding Europe. However, the Conservatives' cautious approach continued to be an element of their foreign policy in Europe, making them passive followers within their western alliance in determining the trajectory of the security and political makeup of the post-Cold War European landscape.

Chapter III

The Canadian Contribution to Reconstructing Europe

On May 26, 1990 in a speech given at Humber College in Toronto, Joe Clark stated, “If 1989 was the year of revolution, 1990 marks the beginning of a decade of re-construction. Euphoria still lingers, but the hard work now lies ahead.”¹⁶⁶ It took less than four months following Clark’s speech and a new post-Cold War European landscape was redrawn. The German states swiftly unified after more than forty years of separation. Kohl’s Ten-Point Plan had envisioned a slow transition to link the two German states into a “confederative structure”, but the plan was accelerated in the early months of 1990 by the internal political and economic collapse of the GDR. Kohl’s party (CDU) began to advocate for the rapid ascension of the GDR into West Germany based on Article 23 of the Basic Law.¹⁶⁷ In March, the East German CDU party won a massive victory in the first free elections in the GDR signalling the citizens’ support for a quick unification route. The external aspects of unification were agreed to be determined by the Four Powers in a Two-Plus-Four forum. The West Germans, with full American backing tried to persuade the Soviet leadership to accept a united Germany in NATO. After diplomatic breakthroughs in May and July, Gorbachev finally acquiesced to the western oriented security plans for a united Germany agreeing to withdraw Soviet forces from the GDR in exchange for financial support from Bonn. Economic and monetary unity was achieved in early July, while the final political terms were agreed upon in September, allowing German reunification to be settled on October 3.

¹⁶⁶ Canadian Department of External Affairs, Joe Clark, Notes for a Speech at Humber College, Lakeshore Campus on Canada and the New Europe, Toronto, Ontario, *Statements and Speeches*, 90/9, May 26, 1990.

¹⁶⁷ James W. Davis and William C. Wohlforth, “German Unification,” in *Ending the Cold War: Interpretations, Causation, and the Study of International Relations*, ed. Richard K. Herrmann and Richard Ned Lewbow (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 132.

Throughout 1990, the Canadian Conservative government under Brian Mulroney was a vocal advocate for the peaceful reunification of the German states. Mulroney consistently supported Kohl's unification agenda that sought a unified Germany under the influence of NATO and one that was fully integrated into the European community. The Canadians were not invited to be involved in determining the external aspects of German unification and were excluded from the Two-Plus-Four meetings. However, realizing they were on the threshold of a new European architecture the Conservatives announced in February that they were reviewing their European policy in response to the Eastern European revolutions. Throughout early spring, Canadians debated more than ever whether NATO was still relevant to their security needs in a post-Cold War era.¹⁶⁸ Some regarded Canada's security connection to Europe as old Cold War alignment and believed NATO needed to evolve into a "collective security" apparatus.

By May, the Conservatives had finalized their foreign policy strategy for Europe. Following the traditional line, Clark reiterated that the European connection was integral to Canadian security. The official Conservative policy called for a reformed NATO, a more engaged CSCE, and stronger Canadian ties to the European Community. The policy proposed by External Affairs indicated the Canadian government had no intention to destabilize its alliance during this crucial period in East-West relations. Canada wanted to be involved in rebuilding Europe, and like its American and West German counterparts believed its interests could best be served through an expanded NATO. As the Cold War came to a close, it was evident that Canadian foreign policy supported a western dominated unified Germany as it not only reinforced Canada's alliance, but positioned them as victors against a weakened Soviet Union in post-Cold War Europe.

¹⁶⁸ David G. Haglund, "The NATO of its Dreams: Canada and the Cooperative Security Alliance," *International Journal* 52, no.3 (1997): 476.

Attaining Soviet Acceptance of Unification

Throughout December and early January, the Soviets had accepted that the Berlin Wall had vanished, although they were not ready to give their assent to the unification of the German states. During these critical weeks, the Soviets failed to devise a clear strategy on the German question. They became increasingly agitated with Kohl and Bush's western policy, which was unwavering in its support for a united Germany under the roof of NATO. On December 19 before the European Parliament in Strasbourg, Shevardnadze stressed that although German unification may be inevitable in the future, "the world had to respect the sacrifices of the Second World War and that Europe had to overcome its own division before one could talk of German unity."¹⁶⁹ According to Alexander von Plato, this speech revealed the Soviets' lack of coordination, as it mentioned various strategies on how to deal with the German issue, but offered no concrete solutions.¹⁷⁰ Unsure of their approach, Gorbachev attempted to slow down the process in mid-December when he called for a four-power meeting of ambassadors in the Berlin Allied Control Council building to discuss the explosive German developments, purposely excluding the German states. Although British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and French President Francois Mitterrand had their own hesitations regarding German unity, the western powers were united in their decision to avoid discussing the larger issue at hand and confined the discussion to practical matters concerning Berlin.¹⁷¹ Crippled with indecision in those early weeks, the Soviet policy towards Germany was chaotic.¹⁷² On one hand the Soviet leadership recognized the inevitability of German unification, while on the other they worked to slow any

¹⁶⁹ For text of Shevardnadze speech, see "Evropa: Vremia peremen," Pravda, December 20, 1989, quoted in Angela E. Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn: Unification, The Soviet Collapse, and the New Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 101.

¹⁷⁰ von Plato, 418.

¹⁷¹ Angela E. Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn: Unification, The Soviet Collapse, and the New Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 102.

¹⁷² von Plato, 418.

developments in that direction.

It was finally at a Soviet meeting of advisors on January 25, 1990 that a clear plan emerged from the Soviet side. After a four-hour long session, the Soviets agreed to give up the hope of preserving a separate East German state and decided to shift the Kremlin's German foreign policy towards the West since they deemed German unification to be inevitable. However, in defense of Soviet interests Gorbachev suggested that the FRG should leave NATO and that there should be a "simultaneous withdrawal" of all military armed forces from Central Europe.¹⁷³ In addition, Gorbachev's chief foreign policy advisor, Anatoly Cherniaev, proposed talks between the four victors and the two German states which he called the Four-Plus-Two.¹⁷⁴ Around the same time in Washington, the U.S. State Department planning staff had come up with the same format to deal with the German question. However, after proposing the idea to Genscher he insisted that the format should be called the Two-Plus-Four in order not to undermine the status of the German involvement. By the end of January the platform to determine the external aspects of unity had been decided.

On February 9, U.S. Secretary of State, James Baker, flew to Moscow to reassure Gorbachev that the unification process would precede smoothly. In his talks he made it clear that the West opposed the concept of a neutral Germany in the heart of Europe. To garner support for a united Germany in NATO he told Gorbachev that "not an inch of NATO's present military jurisdiction will spread in an eastern direction." When Gorbachev stated that a "broadening of the NATO zone is not acceptable," Baker replied, "We agree with that."¹⁷⁵ Baker's comments were only intended to apply for East Germany's position in NATO, but they gave Gorbachev a

¹⁷³ von Plato, 419.

¹⁷⁴ Stent, 114.

¹⁷⁵ Record of Conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and James Baker, February 9, 1990 in *Masterpieces of History: The Peaceful End of the Cold War in Europe, 1989*, ed. Svetlana Savranskaya, Thomas Blanton, and Vladislav Zubok (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2010) 680, 683.

false sense of security that the United States had no intention to destabilize Soviet security.

Gorbachev's official acceptance of German unification was made known to Kohl during his state visit to Moscow one day after Baker's trip. Kohl reported a detailed account of the political and economic disintegration of the GDR which he used to justify to Gorbachev his decision to support a speedy unification route. He reiterated to Gorbachev that a neutral Germany would be *eine historische Dummheit* (a historical stupidity), and that NATO would not extend eastwards into former GDR territory.¹⁷⁶ Following Kohl's discussion, Gorbachev announced that he agreed that it was up to the German people to decide their own fate. He mentioned that he did not know what Germany's security alignment would eventually be, as that was still to be determined, yet he explained that he had no issues with the Two-Plus-Four format to agree on a solution. Gorbachev's announcement revealed the Soviet shift towards the German issue. Kohl revealed in a communique after his discussion, "Gorbachev and I agree it is the sole right of the German people to decide whether they want to live together in one state. Gorbachev promised to me unequivocally that the Soviet Union will respect the decisions of the Germans and that the Germans themselves are responsible for determining the timing and manner of unification."¹⁷⁷ Within a few weeks, the Soviets had moved from uncertainty towards full acceptance of German unification.

The situation was deteriorating so rapidly in the GDR that democratic elections scheduled for May had been pushed up to March 18. Modrow had no solutions to the national economic problems, roundtable talks were inconclusive, and angry citizens had stormed the hated Stasi headquarters. Kohl's government was hoping that the elections would sweep the SED out of

¹⁷⁶ Kettenacker, 146.

¹⁷⁷ Communique by Helmut Kohl after his discussion with Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow, February 10, 1990 in *German Unification and its Discontents: Documents from the Peaceful Revolution*, ed. Richard T. Gray and Sabine Wilke (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996), 130.

power. With elections looming, Kohl adjusted his unification strategy by mid-February. He began to advocate for the takeover of the GDR by the FRG according to Article 23 of West German law, not Article 146 which outlined that a new constitution be drafted for the merger.¹⁷⁸ The East German CDU political party, “Alliance for Germany”, supported Kohl’s proposal. On March 18, East Germans in the GDR voted in their first free elections and produced a spectacular result for Kohl’s coalition.¹⁷⁹ The GDR had voted for unification. The East German CDU attracted 48.1% of the vote, over twice the percentage cast for the nearest rival party.¹⁸⁰ For Kohl, the elections infused him with renewed confidence and he adjusted his timetable hoping to invoke Article 23 by the summer or early fall of 1990.

The Process becomes Two-Plus-Four

The Two-Plus-Four forum was initially announced at the Open Skies Conference in Ottawa on February 12. The conference had been scheduled for the foreign ministers of NATO and the Warsaw Pact to begin negotiations over the question of aerial surveillance. The initiative of Open Skies was first launched by President Eisenhower in 1955, and was reintroduced by the Canadian government under Mulroney as a response to Soviet openness in the spring of 1989.¹⁸¹ Mulroney had persuaded Bush to propose an Open Skies Conference as an effort to reduce East-West tension and convinced him by stating, “If you don’t do it, Gorbachev may.”¹⁸² Seizing on the opportunity, Bush announced support for the initiative in May where it was endorsed at the NATO summit later that month. Yet as the foreign ministers gathered in the Canadian capital to discuss the Open Skies initiative in early 1990 the conference was quickly overshadowed by the

¹⁷⁸ Maier, 243.

¹⁷⁹ Zelikow and Rice, 230.

¹⁸⁰ Pekka Kalevi Hämäläinen, *Uniting Germany: Actions and Reactions* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 143.

¹⁸¹ Zelikow and Rice, 191 and Interview with John Noble.

¹⁸² Interview with John Noble.

German question. The foreign ministers of the four powers and the two German states used the gathering as an opportunity to work out the final details for the framework that would determine the external aspects of German unity. On February 13 they released an announcement to the press that stated that the foreign ministers of the GDR and the FRG would negotiate with the foreign ministers of the four powers to determine the “external aspects of the establishment of German unity, including the issues of security of the neighbouring states” and that “preliminary discussions at the official level will begin shortly.”¹⁸³

The announcement was met with fierce criticism from their fellow NATO members. The Netherlands, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Belgium, and Spain all expressed frustration for being excluded from the process.¹⁸⁴ During a closed NATO ministerial meeting, Italian foreign minister Gianni De Michelis voiced his irritation for being left out, and in a moment of exasperation Genscher harshly retorted, “You are not part of the game.”¹⁸⁵ The Canadians had also been placed on the sidelines of the Two-Plus-Four. According to Zelikow and Rice, it was “particularly embarrassing” for the Canadians to be excluded from the conference since they were the designated hosts.¹⁸⁶ Frank Elbe, Genscher’s Director of Cabinet, who was present at the conference, remembered that “the Canadian hosts complained that history had been made in their capital and they had not been informed in advance.”¹⁸⁷ In addition, Robert Blackwill, an American Security Council official, quoted a Canadian official who stated, “We felt like a piano player on the ground floor of a whorehouse, who has some sort of idea of what is going on in the upper floors.”¹⁸⁸ In his interview, Robert Fowler also contends that it was “belittling” for Canada

¹⁸³ Zelikow and Rice, 193.

¹⁸⁴ Lehmkuhl, 1,

¹⁸⁵ Zelikow and Rice, 193.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 193.

¹⁸⁷ Frank Elbe, “The Diplomatic Path to German Unity,” *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 46 (spring 2010), 39.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

to be excluded from the conference and the Canadian role was reduced to that of “hotelkeepers”.¹⁸⁹

The Canadian government’s reaction to the Two-Plus-Four indicated that it also felt slighted by the exclusion. On March 5, speaking in the House of Commons Clark stated that Canada was one of three nations that maintained a troop presence in Germany and consequently have an “unusual interest in the implications of unification.” He agreed that some of Canada’s concerns with German unity could be resolved through consultations in the multilateral forums of NATO and the CSCE, but he suggested that possibly “informal arrangements” could be made to involve Canada in the German process.¹⁹⁰ In addition, William Doody, the Deputy Leader of the Government in the Canadian Senate, announced during a parliamentary session just a few days earlier that the Canadian government supported the peaceful reunification of Germany, but that the process should include the following conditions: consultations with all interested parties, including Canada, and maintenance of stability in Europe based on the 1975 Helsinki final act.¹⁹¹

However, plans to include Canada on some level in the Two-Plus-Four talks never materialized. One explanation may be that the Conservative government was lacklustre in their efforts to influence European policy. According to Canadian historians, Nelson Michaud and Kim Richard Nossal, “neither Mulroney nor Clark seemed comfortable in Europe, and they did not devote the kind of time and attention to European affairs that they did to other dossiers.”¹⁹² Interviewee John Noble expressed similar sentiments that Clark was never that interested in the European realm. He mentioned that Clark may have been upset to be excluded from the Two-Plus-Four talks, but instead of demanding a Canadian role, he chose rather to endorse the

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Robert Fowler.

¹⁹⁰ Canada, House of Commons, (Hansard) 34th Parliament, 2nd session, March 5, 1990.

¹⁹¹ Canada, Debates of the Senate, Official Report (Hansard) 133, no.56, February 21, 1990.

¹⁹² Michaud and Nossal, *The Conservative Era in Canadian Foreign Policy*, 15.

proposal because his main purpose was always to keep NATO united.¹⁹³ In his interview almost twenty-five years after the conference, Fowler still expressed indignation for the lack of effort by the Conservative government to influence policy in the international arena at the end of the Cold War. He argued, “I would like to have seen Canada more insistent that we be at such tables, we have earned our membership, and we have paid the cost of admission to be determining the future shape of Europe.”¹⁹⁴ The Conservative government never challenged its relegation to the outside sphere of diplomacy to determine the external aspects of German unity.

Instead, the Conservative approach was to be a vocal advocate for its allies as they speedily planned for unification. On February 5, Clark gave a speech at McGill University stating that, “Canada, along with NATO, has always supported the peaceful reunification of Germany. We do so today...A united Germany can be a force for peace and prosperity throughout Europe.”¹⁹⁵ A week later, Mulroney told the press that Canada wholly supported reunification based the self-determination of the German people. While in Ottawa, Genscher thanked Mulroney for his endorsement, “Your statement is important for the dignity of Germans. Those who would criticize unification don’t know what they are saying.”¹⁹⁶ In addition, three years after unity had been achieved; Kohl described Mulroney in a speech to a committee in the German Reichstag as being one of the three foreign leaders that helped make unification possible.¹⁹⁷

Although Mulroney was a consistent supporter of unification throughout 1990, he did have some reservations. He mentioned to Genscher that he was bothered that “unification for

¹⁹³ Interview with John Noble.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Robert Fowler.

¹⁹⁵ Canadian Department of External Affairs, Joe Clark, Notes for a Speech at the Department of Political Science and Economics of McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, *Statements and Speeches*, 90/3, February 5, 1990.

¹⁹⁶ Mulroney, 722.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 725.

Germany appears to be fuelled not just by the legitimate desire of the two states to come together, but by the total collapse of the economy of one state,” and that “you’re not really talking about a merger; this is a takeover.”¹⁹⁸ Mulroney was concerned for the future common market since the European Community had not been designed to accommodate a strengthened Germany. Zelikow and Rice made note that Mulroney unhelpfully stated these worries to Shevardnadze at the Ottawa conference at the same time his allies were trying to pacify Soviet anxieties.¹⁹⁹ In addition, Bush mentioned to Mulroney in early February that some within the western alliance were suggesting that some Soviet troops should be allowed to remain stationed in East Germany. Mulroney was angered by the potential concession, “The minimum price for German unity should be full membership in NATO and full support in all the western organizations and full support for American leadership of the alliance.” He went further with his support for NATO, “We are not renting our seat in Europe. We paid for it. If people want to know how Canada paid for its seat in Europe they should check out the graves in Belgium and France. NATO got us this far. Solidarity in the Alliance will get us further.”²⁰⁰

Two months later, Mulroney reiterated his unwavering support for the western alliance. In a news conference with President Bush in Toronto he announced that the Americans and the Canadians see “eye-to-eye” on the solidarity of NATO, and that it has been the force for peace over the last fifty years in Europe. At this occasion, he mentioned that it was in Canada’s interests to be involved in rebuilding the new architecture of Europe and that he believed NATO was the instrument through which Canada and the United States could best play a role.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ Mulroney, 724.

¹⁹⁹ Zelikow and Rice, 192.

²⁰⁰ Mulroney, 725.

²⁰¹ News Conference of the President and Prime Minister at Sky dome, Toronto, April 10, 1990: NATO in *Age of the Offered Hand: The Cross Border Partnership Between President George H.W. Bush and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, A Documentary History*, ed. James McGrath and Arthur Milnes (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009) 51.

Although Mulroney was pledging full support for Canada's security alliance in the new Europe, he was constrained by the deepening monetary crisis at home. In a telephone conversation with Kohl in February, he mentioned that Canada desired a united Germany in NATO, but at the same time his government was in the process of rethinking the strategic importance of continuing to station Canadian troops on German soil due to the affiliated cost.²⁰²

Determining the Conditions

The first Two-Plus-Four meeting was held in Bonn on May 5. Moscow presented its stipulations for the unity treaty: it needed to resolve the issue of Germany's alliance membership, the borders of a future Germany, conditions related to Berlin, the status of troops, and a final settlement for all the Four Powers. In his opening statement, Shevardnadze made it clear to the gathered ministers that the Soviet Union would not accept a united Germany in NATO; instead he proposed a strengthened CSCE structure that would include a division to oversee the military and political situation in Germany.²⁰³ However, he shocked those at the meeting when he proposed to Kohl to move forward with the internal unification process before a solution to Germany's military status had been determined. This was a clear change in Soviet policy.²⁰⁴ Bush interpreted this message to mean that the Soviets needed more time to determine their strategy towards Germany's alliance membership. Kohl and Bush agreed that if the structure of NATO were to change, the Soviets would possibly be open to a unified Germany in their alliance. Together they jointly discussed new strategies to reform their existing alliance that

²⁰² Dokument Nr. 190: Telefongespräch Kohl mit Mulroney, 21.2. 1990: Deutsche Einheit, S. 2487. Oldenbourg Verlag; <http://www.digitale-bibliothek.de/band21.htm>., quoted in Ursula Lehmkühl, "The "Ottawa Formula" and Transatlantic Relations: Politics and Diplomacy of the "Two-Plus-Four" Negotiations." *Eurostudia* 5 (2009): 15.

²⁰³ Zelikow and Rice, 248.

²⁰⁴ Manfred Görtemaker, *Unifying Germany, 1989-1990* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 181.

would be presented at the next NATO summit in July.²⁰⁵ In addition, at the conference the Soviet foreign minister asked Kohl for loans from the FRG amounting to 20 billion Deutsche Mark (DM).²⁰⁶ The request suggested to the West Germans that financial aid was a crucial condition for the Soviets to accept the terms of unification. Kohl determined his next move would be to send representatives to Moscow to deal with the delicate subject of financial credits.

The Soviet Union was experiencing a deep financial crisis. They were struggling to repay foreign debt and they needed immediate finances since they were unable to turn to private business. The looming economic implosion within the country threatened Gorbachev's entire reform system. Kohl recognized the necessity of stabilizing the markets to secure Gorbachev's position to avoid any upset to the unification process. In addition, he also believed that if he opened the wallets of the FRG it would be difficult for Moscow to maintain considerable opposition to a settlement on the German question. Without telling his cabinet, Kohl secretly sent Teltschik and two key German bankers on May 14 to Moscow to offer Gorbachev 5 billion DM.²⁰⁷ After some deliberation, the Soviets agreed to the package. Teltschik returned to Bonn the same day convinced that Kohl was appropriately navigating the Soviets towards unification.²⁰⁸ However, the issue of economic assistance resurfaced just days before the official unification treaty was signed in September. To agree to his signature on the treaty, Gorbachev demanded a financial increase totaling the final settlement to 12 billion DM and a 3 billion interest free loan.²⁰⁹

Given Soviet approval, the West and East Germans moved forward with the planning of the internal aspects of unification. The most contentious issue to be decided upon was the

²⁰⁵ Hämäläinen, 163.

²⁰⁶ Görtemaker, 178.

²⁰⁷ Kettenacker, 151.

²⁰⁸ Zelikow and Rice, 259.

²⁰⁹ Kettenacker, 158.

currency union. Financial experts in the FRG argued that a gradual approach needed to be taken.²¹⁰ Too quick of a merger could raise inflation in the west and threaten bankruptcies in the GDR. The majority of westerners supported a two East German to one West German mark exchange rate, while easterners fought for a one to one rate. However, going against the advice of the chairman of the Bundesbank, Kohl persuaded his government to support the rate favourable to East Germans in order to encourage support for unification in the East.²¹¹ Agreement was reached in May and the currency union went into effect on July 1.

A second state treaty was required for a complete transition to unification. According to the March elections, the East Germans had voted for the fast-track solution of joining the FRG based on Article 23 of West German law. It was not a merger, but a takeover, and western legislation needed to be introduced into the GDR. Negotiations over the treaty details had started as early as February and were concerned with the deconstruction of a twentieth century state including legislation, administration, state assets, treaty obligations, culture, and social questions.²¹² The unification talks needed to bring together two incompatible political systems under one roof. When the two parties met for official negotiations in July, the East Germans hoped for a “shared” approach, but were quickly corrected by the West German Interior Minister Wolfgang Schäuble, “This is the accession of the GDR to the FRG, not the reverse. We do not want to trample coldly on your wishes and interests. But this is not the reunification of two equal states.”²¹³ After months of negotiations rife with political clashes, compromises were finally

²¹⁰ Jarausch, 143.

²¹¹ Ibid., 143.

²¹² Kettenacker, 174.

²¹³ Jarausch, 170.

reached. The massive Unification Treaty with its one thousand pages, supplements, and appending notes was signed on August 31 formally integrating the GDR into the FRG.²¹⁴

Canadian Propositions

As the borders of postwar Europe were being reorganized, Canada recognized the need to respond. On February 5, in his speech at McGill University, Clark announced a review of Canada's foreign policy in Europe. He stated, "Canadian policy towards Europe will be under virtually constant review. What is happening in Europe is not just a change in current events, but a change in history. And we Canadians have an importance place in that history."²¹⁵ In response to the foreign policy review, the Conservatives organized a multi-party parliamentary standing committee to examine, and put forward a strategy to deal with the situation in the Soviet Union and the two German states. The committee published their recommendations in early June after traveling to the region in April and hearing from more than sixty expert witnesses on the matter.²¹⁶ In their findings they reported that in the transition years of rebuilding Europe they saw a "special opportunity for Canada to participate in the design and building of new pan-European institutions," and that "Canada should shift its center of attention from military security to mutual economic and political development."²¹⁷

In regards to the Soviet Union, the committee recommended that Canadian foreign policy should eliminate adversarial politics and begin to see the USSR as a partner in the international community. They reported that Canada should encourage Soviet participation in existing

²¹⁴ Merkl, 224.

²¹⁵ Canadian Department of External Affairs, Joe Clark, Notes for a Speech at the Department of Political Science and Economics of McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, *Statements and Speeches*, 90/3, February 5, 1990.

²¹⁶ House of Commons Canada, Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade. *Report on the Committee's Visit to the Soviet Union and the Germanies, April 20-May 5, 1990*. Issue No. 54, June 7, 1990. Committee Print. A copy of this report was given to the author and Alexander von Plato from Bill Blaikie, a member of the committee during his interview on March 25, 2013. The government report used in this thesis is in the possession of the author.

²¹⁷ Report on the Committee's Visit, 4.

international forums so they can be a “constructive player in the multilateral arena.”²¹⁸ The Report confirmed that the recent rise of economic and political challenges in the Soviet Union were indicators of the genuineness of Gorbachev’s reforms. In response to the economic challenges, the committee encouraged Canadian assistance in Soviet economic development. As well, the Report also touched on Gorbachev’s struggles to control the ambitions of separatists’ nationalist goals throughout the region. The committee recommended, aside from the Baltic case (in which Canada consistently supported the right of Baltic independence), that Canada should continue to recognize the republics as parts of the Soviet Union. The Report called for greater decentralization in the state, but made it clear they did not want to see Gorbachev have to enter into a civil war.²¹⁹

For the German states, after meeting with officials during a four day visit to East Berlin and then West Berlin and Bonn, the committee concluded that Canada had little say in the internal aspects of German unification, but offered recommendations for three specific external issues: the Poland-German border, Germany and the European Economic Community, and Germany and NATO.

Germany’s border with Poland had become a controversial issue in the unification process. In his “ten-point” speech Kohl had neglected to recognize the Oder-Neisse-frontier. In March he shocked the international community when he suggested that a final border treaty be signed only after unification and it would be conditional on the renunciation of Polish claims for war reparations.²²⁰ The Warsaw government was incensed and pressed for ratifying the border treaty before unification. The Canadian government was sympathetic to the Poles demands. There was a large and politically active Polish community in Canada that often lobbied the

²¹⁸ Report on the Committee’s Visit, 4.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 7-12.

²²⁰ Ash, 230.

government in order to influence foreign policy outcomes, particularly throughout the late 1980s. These immigrant groups were so populous that in his speeches Clark often noted that “one in ten Canadians could trace their heritage to Eastern Europe.”²²¹ Throughout the spring of 1990, members of Parliament, Jesse Flis and Bill Kempling submitted petitions in the House of Commons signed by thousands of Polish-Canadians that called for Germany to recognize the present borders of Poland and Germany as final and inviolable.²²² Due to international pressure, the Bundestag agreed to pass a resolution on June 21 that promised to affirm the existing borders of Europe. The standing committee firmly supported this assurance. In addition, the committee also addressed the importance of anchoring Germany in the European community for the long-term guarantee of its present borders. The Report declared, “The committee welcomes the strong evidence of German commitment to peaceful and constructive membership in the community of Europe. In that connection, we declare that respect for the Poland-German border is, and must remain, a cornerstone of German unification.”²²³

The second, although less controversial external aspect examined by the committee concerned a united Germany in the European Economic Community. The Report indicated that the EC would accommodate an enlarged Germany on the continent. It noted that the economic path for the united Germany was western oriented and would eventually extend its influence into Central Europe. Therefore, the Report encouraged Canada to increase its trade and diplomatic dealings in a united Germany. The Report stated, “A united Germany will become one of the main bridges over which East-West commerce will pass and Canada should be in a position to

²²¹ Roy Norton, “Ethnic Groups and Conservative Foreign Policy,” in *Diplomatic Departures: The Conservative Era in Canadian Foreign Policy: 1984-1993*, ed. Nelson Michaud and Kim Richard Nossal (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2001), 243.

²²² Canada, House of Commons, (Hansard) 34th Parliament, 2nd session, March 15, 1990 and Canada, House of Commons, (Hansard) 34th Parliament, 2nd session, June 27, 1990.

²²³ Report on the Committee’s Visit, 23.

take advantage of this development.”²²⁴

The final issue considered by the committee involved a united Germany in NATO. The standing committee reported that on their visit to the German states they found that the general agreement among Germans supported a united Germany in NATO. They mentioned that a neutral Germany was in no one’s interest, and in this crucial chapter in East-West relations it would be risky to destabilize the western alliance. Although the majority of West German politicians supported this view, there was always a minority in the FRG that supported a neutral Germany, and many in East Germany actually opposed a united Germany in NATO.²²⁵ Although the Report discussed the necessity of incorporating Germany into NATO structures it agreed that it would be difficult for the Soviets to accept this proposal. They reinforced that the Soviet collective memory of the war perpetuated a real fear of German unification. To accommodate Soviet concerns the committee endorsed two concessions, “that no NATO troops be stationed on what is now East German soil and that, conversely, the 350,000 Soviet troops in the GDR be allowed to stay for a transitional period.”²²⁶ The Report quoted Dr. Messelwitz, the Parliamentary State Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the GDR, “We need unconventional solutions or else the divisions of Europe will only be repeated further east.”²²⁷

Although the committee believed that such concessions would be important to get the Soviets to agree to unification, they noted that these offers reiterated the notion of the Soviet Union as the occupiers of Central Europe. The Report claimed that this is what Gorbachev worked hard to dismiss and that he desired to see the Soviet Union accepted into Europe and into the wider international community. According to the committee, his real fear was that German

²²⁴ Report on the Committee’s Visit, 24.

²²⁵ Stent, 113.

²²⁶ Report on the Committee’s Visit, 24.

²²⁷ Ibid., 24.

unification would impede this process.²²⁸ The committee suggested that “the impasse over the relationship between a united Germany and NATO will only be resolved by the West wholeheartedly embracing the Soviet Union’s long-term goal of participation leading to full membership in the European Community...it is time to begin thinking of the USSR as an ally, and of constructing systems on cooperative security based on that central proposition.”²²⁹ The Report applauded Clark for his offer of practical solutions to help transform the existing security structures towards “constructive cooperation”, such as regular meetings between the Soviets and the leaders of NATO and the signing of a non-aggression treaty between the alliances.

However, the committee recommended that these efforts were not enough. The Report stated, “While transforming the alliances is one track leading towards such a system, we think it cannot and should not be expected to carry all the freight.”²³⁰ It still sets up two systems that are susceptible to falling into old ways of adversarial thinking. The committee recommended that “we should start building alternative structures of cooperative security that will, in all likelihood, eventually replace the alliances. This is where the CSCE comes into play.”²³¹ The committee called for the CSCE to construct new institutions that would include the USSR, Europe, the United States, and Canada. These institutions could then evolve into new “pan-European security institutions of the future” that would address any security concerns in post-Cold War Europe.

Throughout late spring, Gorbachev also advocated a similar security strategy. He first revealed his thoughts on an all-European security system to the East German leader of the CDU, Lothar de Maiziere in April, then with Horst Teltschik, and finally with Francois Mitterrand

²²⁸ Report on the Committee’s Visit, 28.

²²⁹ Ibid., 29.

²³⁰ Ibid., 30.

²³¹ Ibid., 30.

during a state visit to Moscow in May.²³² Gorbachev advocated an “all-European house” to emerge after the current military blocs disbanded, one that also included the USSR, the United States, and Canada. Mitterrand affirmed these aspirations, “The equality of all European states that are members must be guaranteed...not one of them should have the feeling that it is in a state of dependence. We could find common positions not only in the question of security, but also in technology, the environment, and many other areas. Then the European states will adopt the habit of working together.”²³³ However, Gorbachev’s vision to replace the existing systems with new CSCE structures never materialized. According to von Plato, this plan was presented by the Soviets after they had lost all of their “bargaining counters: the GDR, most states of the Warsaw Pact, and the parallel withdrawal of Soviet and American troops from Central Europe.”²³⁴ The Soviet vision for European security was presented too late, and was fraught with too much indecision from the Soviet elite for it to be taken seriously by the western powers.

The Conservatives Define their Position

Even though the Conservatives had organized the parliamentary committee to help make recommendations for European policy, their suggestions were never considered. Just days before the committee’s findings were published; the Conservatives announced their revised foreign policy for Europe in a speech by Clark at Humber College in Toronto on May 26. The Conservatives revealed they had no intention to be the architects of a new European security alliance. In his speech, Clark affirmed that the Canadian bridge to Europe was through its involvement in NATO and there was to be no substitute. He reiterated that “security in Canada has no meaning without security in Europe” and that “our interests in Europe are real,

²³² von Plato, 419.

²³³ Ibid., 342.

²³⁴ Ibid., 419.

contemporary, and compelling.”²³⁵ To achieve its interests, the Mulroney government saw best that NATO remain its primary security institution on the continent. Clark stated, “Twelve months do not validate the lessons of history. The possibility of instability is there and Soviet military capabilities remain substantial. Therefore, a strong military mandate for NATO continues to be valid and the North American commitment to Europe is crucial.”²³⁶ He stressed the enduring value of NATO and that it must continue to be the allies’ lead security organization.

However, he explained that for NATO to remain relevant it needed to undergo a transformation to address the security needs of the new European reality. He called for the alliance to pursue a more political role, develop mechanisms for confidence building between East and West, and to establish verification activities.²³⁷ To complement the alliance, Clark advocated for changes to the CSCE structure proposing for increased meetings at the level of heads of state and foreign ministers and the establishment of a parliamentary assembly that would meet on a regular basis. To build on confidence measures, he recommended that the CSCE should host a further round of conventional forces reduction talks. In addition, he also advised for enhanced trade between Canada and the European Community. He concluded his speech by stating that the three “institutional pillars” of the government’s new approach towards post-Cold War Europe were a new direction for NATO, an expanded role of the CSCE, and an intensified relationship with the EC.²³⁸

In addition, he briefly spoke to the issue of German unification. He affirmed the Canadian government’s support for a united Germany, one that was firmly situated within NATO and the wider European community. He made no mention of attempting to involve

²³⁵ Canadian Department of External Affairs, Joe Clark, Notes for a Speech at Humber College, Lakeshore Campus on Canada and the New Europe, Toronto, Ontario, *Statements and Speeches*, 90/9, May 26, 1990.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid.

Canada in the ongoing Two-Plus-Four talks, but stated that the Conservatives wanted to see two crucial issues resolved in the negotiations: that the Soviet's security concerns would be accommodated and that the process would retain the support of the German people.²³⁹ The Mulroney government recognized the importance of eliminating Soviet fears of a united Germany, yet throughout the process its official doctrine never strayed from total support for a united Germany within its western backed alliance.

The lack of consultation from the government angered some of those who had played an important part of the debate. Liberal Andre Ouellet, a member of the standing committee, expressed his frustration during a parliamentary session a few days after the government's announcement, "There was no consultation from the standing committee, that is quite insulting... I understand his (Clark) not wanting the ideas and opinions of opposition members, but I remind him that over half a dozen members of his own party worked with us on these recommendations, they are being treated quite cavalierly and incorrectly by the minister."²⁴⁰

Fellow committee member and External Affairs critic from the New Democratic Party (NDP), Bill Blaikie, added to the discussion with regards to the government's stance on NATO, "It is a mistake to keep talking about NATO as an enduring institution without setting it in the context of a process by which you see it evolving into something else or evolving out of existence, because we do not have the Warsaw Pact anymore, for all intents and purposes."²⁴¹ Blaikie argued that to discuss whether Germany should be in NATO or not was captive to old Cold War thinking, and that it was time to create a common security structure for Europe that extended from Vancouver to Vladivostok. In his interview some twenty years later, Blaikie still contended that a different

²³⁹ Canadian Department of External Affairs, Joe Clark, Notes for a Speech at Humber College, Lakeshore Campus on Canada and the New Europe, Toronto, Ontario, *Statements and Speeches*, 90/9, May 26, 1990.

²⁴⁰ Canada, House of Commons, (Hansard) 34th Parliament, 2nd session, May 31, 1990.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

security paradigm should have emerged. He argued that the Conservatives “didn’t want to give up the sense that what was happening was going to be a victory for the good guys.”²⁴² The committee’s views could not succeed because they were not the opinions of those in power and of those who determined how NATO was to precede going forward into the nineties.

Canadian foreign policy makers were certain of NATO’s validity. According to Heinbecker, the idea of eliminating NATO and the Warsaw Pact were old NDP “pipe dreams” that would never be fulfilled.²⁴³ In his interview, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, also argued that within External Affairs this issue was a “non-starter”, there was just no real motivation amongst government officials for backing a new security system. He stated, “There was just no possibility, NATO was the cornerstone, had been, and was to be the vehicle” for Canadian security.²⁴⁴ Mulroney made the Canadian position clear to Gorbachev in a private meeting on May 29, before the Soviet leader flew to Washington to talk with President Bush. When Gorbachev mentioned to Mulroney that he was worried that NATO would turn into the “basic instrument of Western politics in Europe,” and that he did not want to accept a united Germany in NATO, Mulroney quickly retorted, “I urge you not to pronounce your opposition to this view in Washington because Bush cannot and will not relent on this question, you will wind up humiliated.”²⁴⁵ Mulroney was resolute in his validation for Kohl and Bush’s European agenda.

²⁴² Bill Blaikie, interviewed by Alexander von Plato and University of Winnipeg students, Winnipeg, March 25, 2013. Blaikie was a Member of Parliament (MP) for the New Democratic Party, and was appointed External Affairs Critic in 1987.

²⁴³ Interview with Paul Heinbecker.

²⁴⁴ Lloyd Axworthy, interviewed by Alexander von Plato and Karen Brglez, Winnipeg, November 2, 2012. Axworthy was an MP for the Liberal Party, and was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1996.

²⁴⁵ Mulroney, 763.

Agreements are reached

The Washington summit ended up being decisive for the NATO debate. Gorbachev presented the position that he believed a united Germany should be a member in both NATO and the Warsaw Pact, making the analogy that “one anchor is good, but two anchors are better.”²⁴⁶ Bush responded that he did not understand how such an arrangement would work. He then reminded Gorbachev that the United States had not embarrassed the Soviet Union during the Eastern European revolutions. Gorbachev agreed the U.S. had been restrained, but reinforced the idea that NATO had to reform or else the Soviet people would never accept the new situation. Bush then introduced an idea that had already been presented among lower officials at the Two-Plus-Four talks, that under the Helsinki principles of the CSCE every nation should be able to choose their own alliance membership.²⁴⁷ Therefore, a united Germany should be able to decide its own fate. Gorbachev astonishingly responded, “I agree with your formulation.”²⁴⁸ Gorbachev’s assent was the breakthrough needed for the NATO question. Yet Soviet uncertainty was once again revealed at the Two-Plus-Four talks in June, when Shevardnadze backtracked on Gorbachev’s statements in Washington calling for a continuation of four-power rights after unification and a five year transition period for a united Germany to remain in both alliances.²⁴⁹ The mixed messages revealed the extent of the Soviet internal dissent over the German issue.

The NATO summit on July 5-6 presented the new goals and strategy of the alliance. The idea behind the changes was to put proposals forward that would reassure Gorbachev and strengthen him against the Soviet hardliners in Moscow, in order to advance their acceptance of

²⁴⁶ Stent, 129.

²⁴⁷ Zelikow and Rice, 277.

²⁴⁸ James A. Baker III, *The Politics of Diplomacy* (New York: Putnam, 1995), 253, quoted in Angela E. Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn: Unification, The Soviet Collapse, and the New Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 129.

²⁴⁹ Stent, 130.

German unification. Hosted by the Thatcher government in London, the NATO meetings proposed that the Warsaw Pact and NATO were no longer enemies, new disarmament measures were put in place, the decision was made to cut conventional forces and reduce German troops, and changes were made in strategic military doctrine.²⁵⁰ The summit suggested that Europe was moving closer to Gorbachev's vision of a "common European house."²⁵¹ The NATO promises signalled to Gorbachev that the West was willing to cooperate.

Meetings between Kohl and Gorbachev in Moscow on July 15 and 16 proved the willingness of the Soviets to cooperate with western plans for unification. The West Germans were accepted warmly, and at the beginning of the visit Gorbachev mentioned to Kohl that the 5 billion DM had been a "chess move" that had been played at just the right time.²⁵² The arguments put forward by the western powers to accept a united Germany in NATO, coupled with Soviet indecision finally convinced Gorbachev by mid-summer that this was the only last option worth pursuing. Gorbachev announced to Kohl that a united Germany could belong to NATO, as long as the state borders remained within the GDR, FRG, and Berlin and that there would be a transitional period in which NATO could not station their troops on East German soil. Teltschik recalled that he and Kohl were so surprised they had a difficult time hiding their excitement.²⁵³ After initial talks, the leaders flew to the Caucasus where they determined the final details. They agreed upon complete termination of four power rights, the Bundeswehr (German army) could maintain a troop level of 370,000 soldiers and would be allowed to station its troops in the former GDR after Soviet troops had withdrawn after four years, and a promise

²⁵⁰ Hämäläinen, 204.

²⁵¹ Kettenacker, 156.

²⁵² Ash, 352.

²⁵³ Stent, 135.

that Germany would never own nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons.²⁵⁴ The German-Soviet deal overcame the last major hurdles that had been slowing down the unification process.

However, the Americans, British, and France were all a little irked that they had been excluded from the diplomacy that had settled the German question forty-five years after the war.²⁵⁵

After the Soviet-German breakthrough the final Two-Plus-Four talks began to wind down. Officials worked to put the agreements into proper legal terminology for the “Treaty on Final Arrangements in Relation to Germany” which was to be signed on September 12. The treaty marked the restoration of German sovereignty by the termination of the allies’ authority. One last minute setback by the British delegation on the night before the signing threatened the success of the entire treaty. The British demanded the rights of NATO to maneuver in East German territory following the red army’s retreat in 1994.²⁵⁶ Having already given in to numerous concessions, the Soviets insisted there would be no treaty if the British did not back down. Genscher was so furious he stepped outside of the boundaries for normal diplomacy and woke up Baker in the middle of the night to convince the British to remove their demands.²⁵⁷ They complied. In a Moscow hotel on September 12, the six foreign ministers - the four powers and the two German states signed the document surrounding four power rights allowing for the creation of a sovereign unified German state. On October 3 the treaty went into effect, officially ending the German division.

The Cold War Ends for Canada

One month later, the thirty-four heads of government from both the NATO and Warsaw Pact gathered in Paris to agree on a new structure for the CSCE. For the Canadian government

²⁵⁴ Kettenacker, 157.

²⁵⁵ Ash, 353.

²⁵⁶ Hämäläinen, 221

²⁵⁷ Zelikow and Rice, 361.

this meeting signalled the end of the Cold War. At the European summit on November 19, Mulroney stated, “This summit ends the Cold War – firmly, formally, and, we hope, forever. And this summit launches a pan-European, trans-Atlantic structure that stands for liberty, democracy, justice, and opportunity.”²⁵⁸ The new structure called for a permanent staff to be set up in Prague, an organization for conflict prevention in Vienna, and an office in Warsaw to monitor elections. The council agreed on biennial meetings for heads of state and annual meetings for foreign ministers. In addition, the organization approved the Canadian initiative that called for the implementation of a parliamentary forum where elected representatives come together to cooperate on issues, called the Assembly of Europe.²⁵⁹ The changes did not constitute a new security structure for Europe, but were intended to bridge the divisions between East and West and further help incorporate the Soviet Union into post-Cold War Europe.

In addition, the sixteen members of NATO and the six members of the Warsaw Pact signed the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty at the Paris conference. The 160-page treaty, completed one day earlier in Vienna agreed to massive unilateral cuts to armed forces. According to historian John Halstead, “Accompanied by a NATO-Warsaw Pact declaration of non-aggression, it was the most extensive arms reduction agreement in history.”²⁶⁰ However, the terms of the agreement favoured the West as it imposed harsher cuts to the Warsaw Pact. The Canadians actually fought hard at the CFE negotiations to avoid any cuts to its forces stationed in Germany. Canadian negotiators argued that the Canadian deployment was so small, that any more cuts would make its mission unviable. The Canadians succeeded and became the only

²⁵⁸ Canadian Department of External Affairs, Brian Mulroney, Notes for a Speech at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Summit, Paris, France, *Statements and Speeches*, 90/16, November 19, 1990.

²⁵⁹ John Halstead, “A New Order in Europe: Evolving Security Systems,” in *Canada Among Nations 1990-1991: After the Cold War*, ed. Fen Osler Hampson and Christopher J. Maule (Ottawa: Carlton University Press, 1991), 151.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 151.

NATO power that did not have to reduce its forces in Central Europe.²⁶¹

Supportive of the new agreements between East and West, the Mulroney government also played a modest role in the economic and political reconstruction of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. They organized a “Task Force on Central and Eastern Europe” to administer an expanded assistance program which offered a 30 million CAD aid package to Poland and Hungary and a 425 million CAD line of credit to the Soviet Union to finance its purchase of Canadian wheat. The task force also offered technical assistance and management training, support for Canadian businesses willing to invest in the region, and initiatives to spread democracy.²⁶² In addition, the Canadians became a shareholder in the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and helped the Soviet Union achieve observer status in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).²⁶³ As November came to a close, Canadians agreed to close the chapter on the Cold War.

Over the course of 1990, the European landscape underwent a major transformation. A single German state emerged in Central Europe, radically concluding the central conflict of the Cold War era. The four powers and the two German states worked tirelessly throughout the year to agree on the terms of a final settlement for a united Germany. However, Canada watched the diplomatic spectacle from the sidelines. As a middle power, the Mulroney government was not invited to be involved in the German process, and did not press to try to be. Instead, the Conservatives initiated a foreign policy review to determine Canadian strategy for the unfolding new European architecture. This initiated a passionate debate among Canadians throughout early spring, as the validity of Canada’s connection to Europe was questioned and whether a new

²⁶¹ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 169.

²⁶² Sarty, 160.

²⁶³ Canada. House of Commons. (Hansard) 34th Parliament, 2nd session, May 31, 1990.

security paradigm should emerge in the transition years. Yet any opposing suggestions to traditional Conservative policy were blatantly ignored. Instead, the government fervently supported Canada's transatlantic ties. Believing the security of Canada was bound to Europe and that the best mechanism to maintain that security was through NATO, official government doctrine provided unabashed support for the American and West German allied agenda - a united Germany under the roof of NATO in the heart of Europe. Cautious and unwilling to upset a "victory" for the West at the end of the Cold War, the Mulroney government was passive in its European policy, choosing rather to endorse the political strategy that furthered its own security and economic interests in a post-Cold War era.

Conclusion

Canada and the Post-Cold War Climate

Speaking at the CSCE Paris Summit on November 19, 1990, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney commenced by stating, “A united, democratic Germany is the symbol and the substance of the New Europe. Canada warmly congratulates Chancellor Kohl and his colleagues and we rejoice with all Germans in their historic achievement and the contribution they make to peace and prosperity in Europe.”²⁶⁴ A united Germany in the center of Europe initiated a new chapter in German history. The question was however, what path would a unified Germany take? Before unification had been achieved, official policy makers had stressed to the rest of the world throughout the process that the new Germany would pursue its objectives firmly anchored within the pan-European framework and the Atlantic alliance. Genscher had quoted Thomas Mann’s statement at a CSCE meeting on June 5, “We want a European Germany and not a German Europe.”²⁶⁵ Unified on the guarantee to closely ally with the West, but near to the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe and the former republics of the Soviet Union, a united Germany began the difficult process of determining its role in the new post-Cold War international order.

Together, German unification and the collapse of communism in the East allowed for Germany to become the leading power in Central Europe. In the final months of 1991, the last vestiges of authority in the Soviet Union’s Communist Party were depleted marking the official demise of the USSR. With the demise of the Soviet Union, a power vacuum reshaped Europe’s economic and political orientation. Germany emerged on the continent as the largest trade partner with its Central European neighbours. Trade with Poland doubled, while Germany

²⁶⁴ Canadian Department of External Affairs, Brian Mulroney, Notes for a Speech at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Summit, Paris, France, *Statements and Speeches*, 90/16, November 19, 1990.

²⁶⁵ Görtemaker, 211.

became Czechoslovakia's main trading partner, and 30 percent of Hungary's trade was with the new Germany.²⁶⁶ Although the former GDR contributed little, Germany remained the second largest exporter in the world, after the United States.²⁶⁷ In addition, to fulfill its promise of European integration, the unified state played a key role in forming the European currency union that was signed in the Maastricht Treaty of February 7, 1992.

As a lead power on the continent, the Federal Republic was firmly devoted to the Western alliance extending its presence into Central Europe. In the wake of unification, Kohl continued to advocate for the importance of the commitment to NATO for the new Germany. In a speech in May 1992, he argued, "In a time of change the Atlantic alliance remains the irreplaceable fundamental of freedom and peace in Europe."²⁶⁸ That same year, the new foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel, repeated Kohl's comments in one of his first interviews, "NATO remains, without reservation, the guarantee of our security."²⁶⁹ Used to being a vital supporter of its multilateral institutions, NATO remained at the core of German security.

However, the dynamics of unification posed many challenges for the reunified state. The initial celebratory spirit of unification was quickly overshadowed by the adversity that lay ahead. At home, Germany was now faced with the enormous task of salvaging the dilapidated former GDR. According to historian Lothar Kettenacker, "In the West, the impression prevailed that they had inherited a huge, but run-down family estate, which proved more of a liability than an asset."²⁷⁰ Kohl's prediction in 1990 that there would be "blooming landscapes" in the East failed to recognize the extent of damage that had been created by over forty years of state

²⁶⁶ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 187.

²⁶⁷ Jarausch, 198.

²⁶⁸ Helmut Kohl, "Die Zukunft der deutsch-amerikanischen Partnerschaft," *Bulletin* 59 (June 1992): 577-82, quoted in Rempel, *Counterweights*, 190.

²⁶⁹ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 191.

²⁷⁰ Kettenacker, 204.

mismanagement.²⁷¹ On the international stage, the Germans were uncertain of how much responsibility they wanted to adopt. When they were hesitant to respond with financial and military assistance in the first Gulf War they were immediately criticized by outside observers for being too passive, while on the other hand when they took a firm stance to recognize the separatist's republics in Yugoslavia they were denounced for being too assertive.²⁷² It was quickly realized that the German path following unification turned out to be more difficult to manoeuvre than what the Kohl-Genscher government had previously predicted.

The Canadian government also struggled to be an effective ally in the post-Cold War climate. As the old international order was swept away, the Conservatives faced intense domestic pressure to reassess Canada's traditional defense commitments in Europe due to increasing budget concerns. The Canadian budget deficit for 1989 had reached almost 40 billion CAD, and by the end of 1990, the federal debt had climbed to 380 billion CAD.²⁷³ The unstable financial situation forced the Mulroney government to reign in the budgetary ambitions of the Department of Defense that had been outlined in the 1987 White Paper. By October 1990, the newly appointed Defense Minister, Bill McKnight, announced that Canada's contingent in Europe was under review and that the government was planning to remove 1400 of the 7900 Canadian soldiers stationed in Germany.²⁷⁴ This sparked an intense debate in Canada between the Department of External Affairs, which continued to press for the need to maintain Canadian troops in Europe and the financially strapped Department of Defense that desperately needed to cut costs.²⁷⁵ The Defense Department appeared to have the upper hand over External Affairs when Clark, who had been a strong supporter of the Canadian troop presence, was replaced by

²⁷¹ Kettenacker, 201.

²⁷² Jaraus, 206.

²⁷³ Ripsman, 107.

²⁷⁴ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 169.

²⁷⁵ Interview with Robert Fowler.

Barbara McDougall in early 1991, who stated at one of her first NATO ministerial meetings that, “given the other roles we play in NATO, I don’t think that it’s critical to Canada’s participation to maintain troops in Europe.”²⁷⁶ By the spring the defense report was yet to be completed; nevertheless it seemed likely that the Canadian military commitment was about to be severely scaled back.

Talk of decreasing the Canadian contingent in Europe made German officials uneasy. According to Roy Rempel, for policy makers in Bonn, Canadian troops in Germany was the most important symbol of Canada’s commitment to the Atlantic alliance, and they believed that “the multinational dimension in Western security and defense policy remained a crucial guarantee of the stability of central Europe in the post-Cold War years.”²⁷⁷ A military withdrawal, especially by one of the North American members in the alliance was worrisome for Germany’s future defense. While for Robert Fowler, he believed that Kohl was displeased with the possible pullout because he did not want the Canadians determining the direction of German security policy, which might lead other allies to do the same. Fowler argued, “He didn’t want anybody forcing his hand. Kohl would do it in his time and in his way.”²⁷⁸ As the Department of Defense was in the process of reconsidering its European strategy, the Germans tried to persuade the Canadians to stay put. On a short visit to Ottawa in May of 1991, Genscher tried to encourage the Canadians to remain engaged in Europe, and one month later, when Mulroney was on a state visit to Germany, Kohl reiterated the importance of the Canadian commitment for German security.²⁷⁹

Yet their efforts yielded no results. The completed defense review was finally announced

²⁷⁶ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 172.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 171.

²⁷⁸ Interview with Robert Fowler.

²⁷⁹ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 173.

in September. Based on the premise that the threat in Europe had disappeared, the review called for the complete withdrawal of all Canadian troops from Europe and the closing of the bases in Lahr and Baden-Söllingen by 1994. The Canadian mission had been called off, except for the stationing of a small unit of 1100 military personnel and two CF-18 squadrons at an allied base in Europe to be called upon if needed.²⁸⁰ Exactly forty years later after it began, the long-standing Canadian commitment to Europe had been officially cancelled. The allies were frustrated that the decision had been made without their consultation, but they were at least pleased that the plans did not call for a total withdrawal. However, the government's next move produced utter shock amongst NATO officials. In late February of 1992, Canadian finance minister, Don Mazankowski, announced that the government had called for an even further reduction of 2.2 billion CAD to the Defense Department resulting in the cancellation of the 1100 task force and an even earlier closing of the two bases in Germany.²⁸¹ The allies voiced extreme dissatisfaction with the Canadian decision, yet the Conservatives were undeterred. By the early 1990s, all foreign policy commitments were assessed solely in the light of the Canadian budget deficit.

Although the official doctrine of Mulroney's Conservative party had always espoused strong support for NATO and the importance of the European link for Canadian security, its actions expressed otherwise. Constrained by financial matters, the Conservatives ended up going further than any other Canadian government to reduce Canadian security ties to Europe. Yet, from the beginning of their election they had been the strongest defenders of such foreign policy. Historian Norrin Ripsman argues that it was not the cancellation of the troops to Europe that made it a weak move for the Conservatives, but rather that they did not provide a "clear blueprint

²⁸⁰ Ripsman, 108.

²⁸¹ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 175.

for Canadian security needs in a post-Cold War era.”²⁸² In addition, in the past, Canada had used its military contributions to Europe to justify its influence in NATO circles, especially on the issue of the German question. Many Canadian officials believed their voice would not be heard now that the military commitment had been cancelled. According to a senior official in Canada, “Our flag pole is going to have to be an awfully long one to be noticed.”²⁸³ Though, the cuts did not signify a complete withdrawal from the use of force; Canada supplied two destroyers, a supply ship, a squadron of CF-18 planes, and a field hospital in the Gulf War after being asked for reinforcement from President Bush, in addition they were also active in peacekeeping missions to Somalia and Yugoslavia throughout the early 1990s.²⁸⁴ While these efforts on the international stage were noted by the allies, it did not change the fact that the Canadian military cuts had significantly reduced Canada’s influence and reliability as a member within the Atlantic Alliance. Furthermore, as Canada headed into the new post-Cold War era it was apparent it had no immediate security policies to address the needs of a new Europe.

The conservative/realist approach to foreign policy argues for the importance of preserving a strong NATO commitment for the balance of power in the post-Cold War era. This position is endorsed by Roy Rempel, in *Counterweights: The Failure of Canada’s German and European Policy, 1955-1995*, the leading work in the field of German-Canadian studies. Rempel argues that Canada did not successfully develop its relationship with the FRG in the postwar period by failing to create a reliable defense policy, and Canada’s decision to militarily withdraw from the European sphere has led to decreased influence for Canada in the international arena.²⁸⁵

²⁸² Ripsman, 108.

²⁸³ Interview, quoted in Rempel, *Counterweights*, 175.

²⁸⁴ Ripsman, 109 and Manon Tessier and Michel Fortmann, “The Conservative Approach to International Peacekeeping,” in *Diplomatic Departures: The Conservative Era in Canadian Foreign Policy, 1984-1993*, ed. Nelson Michaud and Kim Richard Nossal (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2001), 122.

²⁸⁵ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 6.

Although Canada's influence within NATO was at a disadvantage with the 1994 troop withdrawal, and the Mulroney government entered post-Cold War Europe without a tangible security vision, the conservative/realist argument still places too much emphasis on the necessity of defense commitments. This approach measures power solely in terms of military capabilities. The fundamental flaw with the conservative/realist concept is that preserving the Canadian troops in Germany was based on old Cold War antagonisms that were not relevant with a Russia that was redefining itself. To maintain the commitment would have been purely symbolic, and Mulroney was forced by budgetary reasons to reformulate Canada's policy approach. While it was necessary for the Conservatives to determine a revised security strategy, it was ultimately in Canada's best interests to begin moving towards a more liberal approach to its foreign policy that places more of an emphasis on economic power and diplomacy in the post-Cold War world.

In this new international order, Canadians loathed paying the price for its security sought through NATO, yet they wanted to continue to reap the benefits of the alliance's successes. By the end of 1991, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia began to advocate for their countries to join the western alliance since they saw it as one of the means to bring Western prosperity and security to their borders. Initially, most NATO officials abandoned the highly controversial strategy of expanding their alliance out of the fear of provoking Russia and not wanting to re-think NATO strategy.²⁸⁶ Including these countries in NATO would also increase the cost and scope of the alliance's mission. As one American general grudgingly stated, "I don't want these God damn countries in my alliance."²⁸⁷ After much deliberation, the Americans were persuaded and announced in 1994 that "it was no longer a question of whether NATO would enlarge, but

²⁸⁶ Stokes, 288.

²⁸⁷ Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 33.

simply a matter of when and how.”²⁸⁸ The Germans were also supportive of the expansion and expressed to their American allies that they were open to working towards the East.²⁸⁹

For the Canadians, Mulroney had been an early advocate for NATO expansion. In the fall of 1991, while giving the commencement address at Stanford University on its one-hundredth anniversary, he stated, “Association in NATO could be extended eventually to former adversaries, were they to want it, once they had fully and irreversibly embraced the transatlantic democratic values that we share.”²⁹⁰ In his memoirs, Mulroney comments how he and his chief foreign policy advisor, Paul Heinbecker, were ahead of their allies in this thinking. By the mid 1990’s, with the support of the new liberal Prime Minister Jean Chretien and the influential Eastern European lobby groups, Canada became an ardent advocate for NATO expansion.²⁹¹ By 1999, the three former Visegrad countries joined the western alliance, and in 2004 expansion extended further when the Baltic States, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovenia joined in.

The western expansionist aims of NATO were viewed by the Russians as a direct affront. The main criticism to emerge from Russia was that NATO expansion violated the terms that had been agreed upon by Kohl, Bush, and Gorbachev in 1990 under the Final Settlement for a united Germany.²⁹² Gorbachev had believed that NATO would not expand when the western allies had made vocal promises throughout the German diplomatic process. According to a foreign policy advisor for Russian President Boris Yeltsin, the lesson to be learnt was that “one must not decide such important questions as the structure of European security on the level of oral assurances,

²⁸⁸ James M. Goldgeier, *Not Whether But When: The U.S. Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), 3.

²⁸⁹ Rempel, *Counterweights*, 191.

²⁹⁰ Mulroney, 883.

²⁹¹ Interview with Lloyd Axworthy.

²⁹² Goldgeier, 15.

inasmuch as this is fraught with potential political crises.”²⁹³ In his interview Jeremy Kinsman believes that the “the whole thing was beginning to look as if the NATO countries believed they’d been the big winners and they were making the Russians feel like losers.”²⁹⁴ The induction of the former Warsaw Pact allies into the western alliance has led to Russia’s antagonistic posturing towards the West in the post-Cold War era, including complicating Russia’s transition to a functioning and open democracy. Paul Heinbecker asserts that it is now a “cool war.”²⁹⁵ The West emerged as the “winner” of the Cold War against its adversary and given the advantage, the western alliance continues to exert its geostrategic reach across Europe marking a new period in East-West relations.

The Canadian legacy in ending the German division has to be assessed in terms of Canada’s capabilities as a middle power on the international stage. Not invited to be involved in the diplomatic bargaining of the Two-Plus-Four, Canada’s influence in the process was restricted to the multilateral institutions that were affected directly by German unification. Nevertheless, Canada used its connections to these forums primarily through NATO and the CSCE, to exert its foreign policy agenda on the German question. Exercising authority within these institutions is the hallmark of Canadian foreign relations in the post-war period.

Leading up to unification, Canadian foreign policy under the Trudeau government worked to further East-West détente. The resulting normalization of relations between the two sides was needed to facilitate the framework that produced German unity. However, as the opportunity for unification accelerated with the opening of the Soviet Union and the Eastern European revolutions, politics in Canada became overwhelmingly conservative. The Mulroney

²⁹³ Aleksei Pushkov, “Bezopasnost,” *Nezavisimaja gazeta*, March 19, 1997, quoted in Angela Stent, *Russian and German Reborn: Unification, The Soviet Collapse, and the New Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 225.

²⁹⁴ Interview with Jeremy Kinsman.

²⁹⁵ Interview with Paul Heinbecker.

government expressed extreme caution towards Gorbachev's reforms and revealed an unwillingness to abandon Canada's combative posturing towards the Soviet Union. As unification was close to being realized, the Conservatives finally prepared their foreign policy strategy which aligned closely with American and West German pursuits. Together, they supported German unification under NATO authority in order to maintain western stability in Europe while furthering their alliance's influence. As the new international order was being determined, the Conservatives were presented with the opportunity to support the creation of a new European security architecture. Yet the idea was quickly abandoned in favour of NATO dominance which allowed for the West to win the Cold War.

The Conservatives revealed they crafted their foreign policy based on the longstanding middle power framework by being unwilling to push for real change at the end of the Cold War. Content to remain in the background, Canada failed to exercise leadership during this pivotal period in modern history. The Conservatives' passiveness during this time can be attributed to several factors: a reluctance to embrace the changes emerging from the Soviet Union that were a direct product of Gorbachev's reforms, a lack of devotion to the European sphere, a preoccupation with domestic affairs, and ultimately, a post-Cold War vision for Europe that was in line with the American and West Germans. These factors revealed that the Conservatives implemented a middle power "style of state behavior" as the Cold War came to a close.

As Canada entered into the post-Cold War period it remained fully committed to its transatlantic alliance and its expansionist aims. However, official Conservative doctrine quickly came into conflict with the financial crises at home, forcing the Conservatives to abandon their longstanding military ties to Europe. The Canadians retreated on the belief that "peace" had been restored with the ceasing of the German division and the subsequent end to the Cold War, but the

resulting euphoria did not last long. Russian angst was quick to reignite in the mid-1990s as NATO expanded eastward towards the direction of its borders. Therefore, as NATO continues to bolster its strength in the post-Cold War period, the consequences of the Canadian politics that helped to usher in this new but still hostile international order are still to be determined.

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